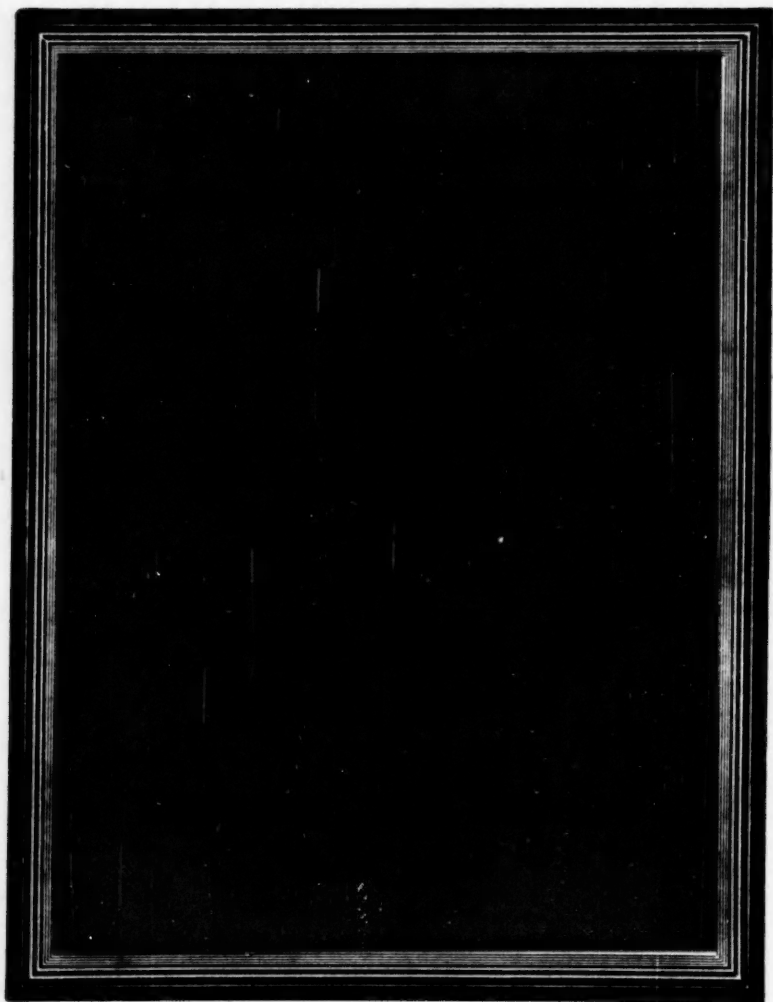


THE  
DUBLIN REVIEW

114th YEAR      SECOND QUARTER, 1950



LONDON: BURNS OATES





THE  
DUBLIN REVIEW

NUMBER 448

Second Quarter 1950



LONDON  
BURNS OATES

THE  
DUBLIN REVIEW

Vol. 10. No. 1. January 1850.



Printed by  
J. G. & Co. Dublin.

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# PARLIAMENT AND THE RESTORED HIERARCHY<sup>1</sup>

## A Centenary and its Lesson

By HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

IN the correspondence of Benedict XIV when the title 'King of England' occurs without qualification it refers to James Stuart. When the Pope has occasion to mention George II, the qualifying epithet, *celui de Londres*, is added, an indication that the day when the *de facto* ruler of Great Britain was sufficiently described by speaking of him as the 'Elector of Hanover' was passing. It was not long before the inevitable step was taken. The taste for travel in Italy had developed among our governing class and in the pontificate of Benedict's successor, Clement XIII, there arrived in Florence an English tourist who was more than a mere nobleman. It was Edward Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, the albino brother of George III. The Holy See was not slow to make use of the opportunity which thus presented itself. The Pope instructed Cardinal Albani to inform Sir Horace Mann, British representative at the grand-ducal Court, that if His Royal Highness should see fit to prolong his travels so as to cross the frontier of the States of the Church, he would be accorded all the honours due to his exalted rank. The Nuncio in Florence was also directed to wait on the Prince for the purpose of conveying to him the same message. The Hanoverian Duke of York came to Rome, and the member of the House of Stuart, who claimed the same title, was ordered to betake himself to Albano while the visit lasted.

With the *rapprochement* between the Papacy and the House of Hanover, the age of persecution began slowly to recede into the past and there followed a period of eighty years of steady progress for the Church in England, marred only by the episode of the Gordon Riots. Legal restrictions on the practice of the Catholic

<sup>1</sup> The Centenary of the establishment by Pius IX of a regular Hierarchy of Catholic Bishops in England in place of the Vicars Apostolic, who had only titular Sees, is being kept this year.

religion were removed and forty years later came Emancipation. English Catholics managed to retain throughout several generations a spirit of sobriety such as characterizes a community which is not being persecuted yet is aware that one false move may be sufficient to bring persecution upon it.

Then came the Oxford conversions which spread the delusion, not only in England but abroad as well, that our country was on the verge of submission to the Holy See. At Oscott, as the converts arrived, professors and students alike were convinced that now at last the prayers which Father Ignatius Spencer had obtained for the conversion of England were near to fulfilment. In Spain, from the Nuncio to the humble parish priest, there was to be met with a like conviction. But most dangerous of all was the presence in Rome itself of this ill-founded belief. Then with startling suddenness came what for a moment at least looked like a serious setback.

Since the reign of James I, English Catholics had been ruled by Vicars Apostolic, first one, then four and latterly eight. In Ireland, on the other hand, a regular Hierarchy had been maintained through the age of persecution, and in 1845 the Government had recognized the territorial titles of the Irish Catholic Bishops. It seemed therefore natural to suppose that no obstacle would be raised in official quarters to the restoration of a regular Hierarchy on this side of the Irish Sea. Unfortunately, Britain had no diplomatic representative at the Court of Rome and the existing state of the law would have made such representation illegal. There was, therefore, only too much ground for mutual misunderstandings. But Italy lay on the overland route to India and England was becoming increasingly interested in her affairs.

In 1847 Lord Minto, father-in-law of the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, was sent on a diplomatic mission which included Rome in its itinerary. Before starting, Minto received a letter from a person in close touch with Lord Shrewsbury, saying that it was the intention of the Pope to appoint an Archbishop of Westminster and that Wiseman was unsuited for the post. Minto was a Presbyterian and would most likely have seen nothing odd in the creation of an Archbishopric without suffragan Sees, a thing which would have surprised an Anglican. The envoy could therefore with some plausibility say that he was unaware of the Pope's intention to set up a *Hierarchy* in England as he had only contemplated the establishment of an Archbishopric.

When received in audience on his arrival in Rome, a draft copy of the brief establishing the Hierarchy was handed to Minto by the Pope himself, though the envoy is said to have laid it on a table without reading it. This draft differed in certain respects from the final draft of the brief which was actually issued three years later, but not sufficiently, it would seem, to justify the Government in its assertions that it had received no notice of the Pope's intentions. It seems probable, however, that had Pius IX acted at the end of 1847 there would have been but little opposition in England to the establishment of the Hierarchy. For the Pope's liberalism had won him a measure of sympathy in this country. But the turn of events imposed a delay. At the end of 1848 Pius left Rome, where the situation had taken a threatening turn, and when he returned in the spring of 1850 his reputation for liberalism was gone. In his exile, first at Gasta and then at Portici, he had been the guest of the anti-liberal King of the Two Sicilies, execrated in England under the name of 'Bomba'. It was France, still regarded as our hereditary foe, who had brought the Pope back to Rome. As he drove in by the Lateran Gate and the pontifical troops knelt to receive his blessing, a French general rode behind him. Now Pius IX was guarded in his palace by French sentries and the author of all this was the nephew of the most powerful enemy England had ever known.

Sympathy in Britain was now with the temporarily vanquished Italian liberals. But these things by themselves would have been insufficient to cause the anti-papal explosion of that year. The essential condition was supplied by the prevalent alarm at the growth of Romanizing tendencies inside the Established Church. At Michaelmas the papal brief re-establishing a Hierarchy of Catholic Bishops in England was published and at the same time Wiseman was created a Cardinal. This last step irritated English Protestants quite as much as the new bishoprics, and it is possible that the agitation would have been less had the new Archbishop's admission to the Sacred College been postponed for a couple of years.

On 7 October Wiseman, on leaving Rome for his return journey, issued his famous pastoral 'From out of the Flaminian Gate'. On the same day another distinguished personage left the Eternal City and for a very different reason. This was Pinelli, the Sardinian Minister, whose departure opened the breach in diplomatic relations between the Papacy and the House of Savoy,

which was closed only with the signature of the Lateran Treaty. Defeated throughout the rest of the peninsula, Italian liberalism rallied in Piedmont, where the Government was legislating in a way which amounted to a claim to exercise direct authority in spiritual matters. The anti-clericals of Piedmont looked to England for sympathy and it was soon apparent that they did not look in vain.

On 9 October, before Wiseman had reached this country, *The Times* published an account of the Consistory at which he had been made a Cardinal, though without unfriendly comment. Three days later appeared a leading article on the Synod of Thurles,<sup>1</sup> hostile yet not violent in tone. But on the 19th the storm broke. 'Is it here then in Westminster,' said the foremost English journal, 'that an Italian priest is to parcel out the spiritual dominion of this country—to employ the renegades of our national church to restore a foreign usurpation over the consciences of men, to sow dissensions in our political society by an undisguised and systematic hostility to the institutions most nearly identified with our national freedom and our national faith?' Then came words gladdening the hearts of Italian liberals. For the writer suggested that 'a bold resolution to shake the rotten edifice of the temporal power to its foundations' might prove a greater danger to the Pope than was the presence of 'a sham Archbishop' at Westminster to the Queen. Though a few days later the same newspaper was expressing its reluctance to share the 'blatant intolerance of Exeter Hall' there can be no doubt that this outburst was highly gratifying to a large volume of opinion, and not less so when the text of Wiseman's pastoral was available and the public read that Catholic England had been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament from which its light had long vanished.

Had a mood of sober reflexion prevailed, the restoration of the Hierarchy might have been viewed in its proper context. The division of Scotland into dioceses by the Episcopal Church was not held to be an infringement of the rights of the Presbyterian Establishment, nor the division of England into districts by the Wesleyans an infraction of those of the Anglican one. When ten years earlier Gregory XVI had divided England into eight Vicariates Apostolic the right of the Catholic Church to settle matters touching its own internal organization had been unquestioned. Still more recently, in 1844, Lord John Russell, then in opposition,

<sup>1</sup> The Synod at which the Irish Hierarchy condemned the Queen's Colleges.



said that statutes forbidding the Irish Catholic Bishops to style themselves by the name of the dioceses to which they did in fact belong were foolish. 'You declare,' he had said, 'that Dr. Murray shall not style himself Archbishop of Dublin; but he is so nevertheless . . .' Queen Victoria was not held to have trespassed upon the authority of the Sultan, or of the Negus, when she 'was graciously pleased to assign spiritual jurisdiction in Syria, Chaldaea, Egypt and Abyssinia' to Michael Solomon Alexander, a convert to Anglicanism from the Synagogue who became the first Protestant Bishop of Jerusalem. The Pope himself had made no protest when the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar exercised episcopal functions in Rome.

Sensible Protestants saw the force of such arguments and the Government left to itself would have most likely recognized their validity. But the state of public opinion was too agitated for Ministers to ignore. What the public really objected to was being reminded that the Pope had a following in this country or even that the Papacy still existed. Gone was the atmosphere of thirty-five years before when Consalvi had visited England, had been charmed by the urbanity of the Regent, and when the health of Pius VII had been drunk at a banquet at which Castlereagh had been present.

In 1850 the anti-papal spirit was not confined to the uneducated and semi-educated. It was felt in literary circles as well. 'After his [Wiseman's] arrival,' wrote Charlotte Brontë, 'London will not be what it was, nor will this day or generation be either *what* or *where* they were. A new Joshua—a greater even than Joshua will command the sun not merely to stand still, but to go back six centuries.'<sup>1</sup> These words were penned on the last day of October. November 5 was ominously near and it presaged a climax. But the explosion was by no means entirely spontaneous.

The See of Durham, fourth in rank in the Anglican Hierarchy, was at that time filled by a prelate of 'progressive' views, so 'progressive' in fact that the Tractarians doubted, and with some reason, his Trinitarian orthodoxy. This was Edward Maltby, a friend of the Latitudinarian Duke of Sussex and promoter of the undenominational University College in London, at the inauguration of which he delivered an address which had distressed Newman. Through the influence of Lord John Russell, Maltby had been preferred by Melbourne to the See of Durham on

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Gaskell, *Life of Charlotte Brontë*. Haworth ed., p. 490.

the death of Van Mildert, the last Prince Bishop, in 1836. When the papal brief re-establishing the Hierarchy became known, Maltby wrote to Russell describing 'the late aggression' of the Pope as 'insolent and insidious'.<sup>1</sup>

Russell, in reply, wrote his famous 'Durham Letter', familiar to visitors to the British Museum, where it was, at least till recently, kept in a glass case. In it he violently attacked the doctrines taught by the Tractarians and indirectly the Catholic religion as well, though asserting that his anger was greater than his alarm. A gratuitous insult to the religion of several millions of the Sovereign's subjects was an unpardonable offence in the first minister of the Crown, and Russell was justly castigated by John Bright, the most eminent Nonconformist in Parliament.

The letter showed a culpable lack of responsibility, for though obviously written a few days earlier, it was dated 4 November and its contents were made public on that day. In the temper of public opinion its publication might easily have led to violence. On the morning of the 5th there must have been but few Catholics who could have left their homes without a feeling of trepidation. There were still persons alive who could remember the Gordon Riots and a repetition of them seemed but too likely. But the Protestants found bloodless methods of giving vent to their feelings. The main celebrations were, of course, reserved for the evening, but from an early hour urchins uttering shrill cries of 'No wafer-gods' perambulated the London streets. Throughout the country the bonfires were said to be double the size and more than twice the number of those seen in recent years. Effigies of the Pope and Cardinal were substituted for those of Guy Fawkes himself. A colossal one of Wiseman, sixteen feet in height, passed down Fleet Street. It was labelled 'Cardinal St. Impudence', the Archbishop's titular church being that of Santa Pudenziana. Outside of London the most imposing celebrations were in Exeter, where a procession of mock friars brandishing instruments of torture paraded the Cathedral yard. It was Protestantism's reply to the Bishop who had refused to institute Mr. Gorham to the living of Bampton Speke on account of his disbelief in Baptismal Regeneration. At Salisbury the whole of the new Hierarchy was burnt in effigy, though some of the Sees had not yet been filled. The hysteria was not confined to the mob and the spirit of 5 November was still alive on Lord Mayor's Day. At the annual Guildhall banquet,

<sup>1</sup> Spencer Walpole, *Life of Lord John Russell*, ii, 120.

Lord Truro, the Lord Chancellor, quoted Shakespeare's words, 'Under our feet we'll stamp thy Cardinal's hat', at which the guests were foolish enough to indulge in hysterical applause. After every concert and theatrical performance the audience would refuse to disperse till it had sung 'God Save the Queen' three times. The ferment continued for some weeks.<sup>1</sup>

But as an antidote to these Romish machinations, militant Protestants now gained support from the appearance in London of Father Gavazzi, an Italian priest turned revolutionary. Like another more famous such, Ugo Bassi, Gavazzi, who ended his days as minister of a 'Free Christian' church in Rome, had belonged to the Barnabite Order. A man of imposing appearance, he helped to inflame public feeling by a series of impassioned diatribes against the Papacy. But by the end of the year, though such cries as 'No Pope in London', or 'The Queen and no surrender' were still to be heard, popular agitation was on the wane. Wiseman had arrived in November and had issued an appeal to the good sense of the English people, which had had some effect. But the official world, both secular and ecclesiastical, now began to look for channels through which its indignation could find expression. In each county the sheriffs summoned meetings of freeholders to address the Queen. Sometimes Catholics would attend and try to make themselves heard. At Dorset a priest was bold enough to do this and to charge the Prime Minister with having got up the 'No Popery' agitation to distract attention from agricultural depression, which indeed may have been a contributory cause. Sometimes the meetings of protest ended otherwise than as their authors had intended. Leeds, instead of addressing a resolution of protest to the Queen, petitioned her to do nothing to endanger religious freedom. In Northumberland and Durham the 'No Popery' meetings were failures and Birmingham refused to send an address of protest. Deputations from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, on the other hand, led by their respective Chancellors, the Duke of Wellington and the Prince Consort, waited on the Queen at Windsor to express the indignation of men who ought to have known better. In each archdeaconry the Anglican clergy assembled for the purpose of giving vent to their feelings. At Oxford the meeting had been arranged to take place

<sup>1</sup> On 13 November appeared in *The Times* a letter from an agitated correspondent announcing the arrival by S.S. *City of Boulogne* of 'nine cases containing twenty-one thousand crucifixes, several thousand figures of the Virgin Mary and a large quantity of prints of bleeding hearts besides an immense number of rosaries and charms'.

in the hall of Merton College, but as it was not big enough was held in the Sheldonian. Dr. Pusey and the leading Tractarian clergy were conspicuously absent.

But no body of men in the whole country could have resented the Pope's action more than the Bishops of the Established Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Sumner, had written a congratulatory letter to the Prime Minister on reading his missive to the Bishop of Durham, and his colleagues, with one accord, began to harp upon the word 'aggression'. The Archbishop of York, Dr. Musgrave, charged the Pope with 'unparalleled aggression'; Dr. Blomfield, Bishop of London, with 'most monstrous and insolent aggression': the devout Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, who held that there was nothing dishonest in morals which would not be patronized by the Catholic clergy, accused Pius IX of 'insolent aggression'; the Bishop of Salisbury fastened on him the charge of 'daring aggression'; the Bishop of Hereford, the famous Dr. Hampden, that of 'presumptuous aggression'.<sup>1</sup> At last Mr. Disraeli could speak of 'aggression' as 'a now familiar but fearsome term' and there was something of an anti-climax when Mr. Roundell Palmer drew a distinction between political and spiritual aggression regarding the bull deposing Elizabeth as an instance of the former and the restoration of the Hierarchy as a case of the latter. He then went on to draw the unpopular conclusion that spiritual aggression should not be combated with political weapons.

Slowly the voice of reason began again to be heard. As early as 9 November the *Illustrated London News* said 'it would seem as if we had gone back seventy years in opinion and feeling' and Lord John Russell's prestige probably never quite recovered from the cartoon in *Punch* in which Edward Leach depicted him as a mischievous but not very brave schoolboy, who chalked the words 'No Popery' on Cardinal Wiseman's door and then ran away as fast as his legs could carry him.

At the beginning of 1851 the Government was faced with a difficult problem. It was itself largely though not wholly responsible for the agitation, yet it could not survive unless something, however small, was done to placate Protestant indignation. The question was, 'What was to be done?' Palmerston, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Russell's Ministry, wrote to his

<sup>1</sup> Two Bishops, Thirlwall of St. Davids, the historian of Greece, and Phillpotts of Exeter, refused to join him in the protest made by their brethren.

brother on 27 January, 'Our difficulty will be to find out a measure which will satisfy reasonable Protestants, without violating those principles of toleration we are pledged to.'<sup>1</sup> Palmerston admitted that their internal organization was a matter for Catholics themselves to decide and said that it was the manner of announcing the change which offended the English people. He added that Wiseman threw the blame on the Pope and the Pope on Wiseman.

Three solutions seemed to offer themselves. One, favoured by the Prince Consort, was that the Pope should be asked to recall Wiseman to Rome and restore the régime of the Vicars Apostolic. Ministers seemed to have considered this plan but felt that they could hardly make such a request without giving to the Pope something in return and it was not easy to see what this could be. A second solution would have been to dispatch warships to one of the Papal ports, Civitavecchia or Ancona, not with the object of bombarding them, but for the purpose of inspiring Pius IX with a salutary fear of Britain's might. Such a course of action would have been overwhelmingly popular on 5 November, but by January would have begun to seem theatrical. The third solution was an Act of Parliament imposing penalties for the assumption of the new titles, since inquiries had shown that those who made use of them could not be prosecuted as the law stood. For it made illegal only the assumption of an existing title held by an Anglican Archbishop or Bishop. Even if the Pope had done as Ullathorne wished and included an 'Archbishop of London' and a 'Bishop of York' in the new Hierarchy, such a proceeding would have been within the bounds of legality. The course decided on was therefore to introduce a Bill rendering illegal the use by Catholic Bishops of English territorial titles, each offence being made punishable by a fine of £100. In addition deeds executed by persons using such descriptions and bequests made to them were declared null and void.

A curious dilemma confronted the Ministers. Catholic episcopal titles had already been recognized in Ireland and there seemed to be a certain lack of logic in refusing to admit them in England. It was therefore decided to extend the scope of the Bill to Ireland.

Parliament met on 4 February. The Queen had already expressed her sentiments in a private letter to her aunt, the Duchess of Gloucester. While expressing her indignation against the Trac-

<sup>1</sup> E. Ashley, *Life of Lord Palmerston*, Vol. II, p. 173.



tarians who 'call themselves Protestants but are in fact quite the contrary', she expressed her regret at the 'unchristian and intolerant spirit which was abroad' and the abuse of the Catholic religion 'which is so painful and cruel towards so many good and innocent Roman Catholics'. The speech from the throne was moderately couched.

'The recent assumption of certain ecclesiastical titles conferred by a foreign power,' said Her Majesty, 'has excited strong feelings in this country; and large bodies of my subjects have presented addresses to me expressing attachment to the throne and praying that such assumption should be resisted. I have assured them of my resolution to maintain the rights of my Crown and the independence of the nation, against all encroachment from whatever quarters it may proceed. I have at the same time expressed my earnest desire and firm determination under God's blessing to maintain unimpaired the religious liberty which is so justly prized by the people of this country.'

Three days after the opening of Parliament Lord John Russell asked leave to introduce the 'Ecclesiastical Titles Bill'. This was not granted unanimously but he obtained it by 395 votes to 63 on 14 February. But if in numbers the supporters of the Bill throughout its passage outmatched their opponents, the preponderance of talent was on the other side. Among those who spoke against the measure were Sir James Graham, Cobden, Bright, Gladstone, Sydney Herbert, Roebuck, Roundell Palmer and Beresford Hope. Bright in an able speech during the first debate on the measure declared papal aggression to be 'a trifling and almost imaginary danger'. He had observed the United States Minister in the House when the Prime Minister was introducing the Bill and wondered what he thought of the people and Parliament of England in the year 1851 on finding it discussing a question like this. He said that the penal laws had been relaxed in Ireland, not because Parliament cared for religious liberty but through fear of an American War.

The majorities in favour of the Bill were undoubtedly swollen by the fear of the Romanizing tendencies in the Church of England, and how strong this feeling was can be gauged by the alarm created by the very mildest of ceremonial developments.

Before the Bill had passed its second reading, a ministerial crisis had occurred and had reached a precarious solution. Russell had resigned and the Queen had sent for Lord Stanley

(afterwards Derby), the Conservative leader. But Stanley had failed to form a Government and Russell had returned to office, though with diminished prestige.

On 7 March the Bill was read in the Commons a second time and Mr. Newdegate, a devout fox-hunting Evangelical squire, sought to make the flesh of the House creep. He had been making an excursion into Canon Law and gave Members a quotation from the *Notitia Congregationum et Tribunalium Curiae Romanae* by Father Hunald Prettenberg, S.J., published in 1693 with a dedication to the Bishop of Paderborn. The good father laid it down that elevation to the sacred purple *ipso facto* withdraws the one so elevated from the authority of his own sovereign, a proposition hardly calculated to make Cardinals welcome in Protestant states.

Sir R. Inglis, an extreme Protestant, who thought that the Bill did not go far enough, wished to see its effects extended to the Colonies. Sydney Herbert, on the other hand, denounced the measure as 'a sheer sham' and regretted to hear men who were able and acute committing themselves to an argument which 'had not a rag of reason to rest on'.

Gladstone's speech against the Bill on its second reading, though he was addressing a House almost solidly against him, was considered one of his oratorical masterpieces. 'He moved,' says his biographer, 'among bulls and rescripts, briefs and pastorals and canon law with as much ease as if he had been arguing about taxes and tariffs'.<sup>1</sup> The second reading was carried by 438 votes to 95 on 25 March.

A few days later took place an event which gave fresh stimulus to the Protestant sentiment which in the country, if not yet in Parliament, was showing signs of beginning to flag. On 8 April the great Lord Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley) wrote in his diary, 'Archdeacon Manning has joined the Church of Rome and four clergymen in Leeds have done the same. Lord, purge the Church of these men, who, while their hearts are in the Vatican, still eat the bread of the Establishment and undermine her.'

Month after month the debates dragged on. A Dublin Member moved that a humble address should be presented to Her Majesty that she should be graciously pleased to give direction that the number of Jesuits in the Kingdom should be laid before the House. The Member for West Surrey asserted that nunneries were either prisons or brothels. When a Catholic Member asked whether such

<sup>1</sup> John Morley, *Life of Gladstone* I, 410.

a statement were in order, the Speaker replied that the Member for West Surrey had said nothing inconsistent with free speech. Priests were called the 'thugs of Christendom' and Mr. Bernal Osborne said that the Catholic clergy in Ireland had only consented to the education of the laity when they could not prevent it. Sometimes discussion would take a theological turn, as when Wiseman was accused of quoting spurious passages from Origen and St. Athanasius in support of devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

A more practical contribution came from Colonel Sibthorp, the eccentric opponent of the Hyde Park Exhibition, who moved that the penalty for illegal assumption of one of the new ecclesiastical titles should be raised from £100 to £500, a proposal negatived by 199 votes to 63. Another proposal which secured the support of 101 militant Protestants, made by the Member for East Somerset, was that an additional clause should make banishment the penalty for the second offence committed under the Act.

The name of Newman, the foremost Catholic in England, could hardly have failed to be heard in Parliament during such a session. On 6 June Mr. Scholefield, one of the Members for Birmingham, stated that a convent was being built there with underground 'cells' which he feared were meant to be used for the 'forcible detention of some of Her Majesty's subjects'. The convent in question was the building in the Hagley Road destined to house Newman's community of Oratorians. The Superior had already protested in the *Morning Chronicle* that the supposed 'cells' were designed for innocuous purposes, one to serve as a larder, one a coal-hole, others for baking and brewing;<sup>1</sup> but this did not prevent Mr. Spooner, the Member for North Warwick, from expressing his belief that the largest of the underground rooms, said to be destined for use as a laundry, might be in reality for the imprisonment of one whose conversion was being sought.

The third reading was carried in the Commons on 4 July by 263 votes to 46, Mr. Disraeli, who had begun by ridiculing the promoters of the 'No Popery' agitation, voting with the 'Ayes'. Three days later the Marquess of Lansdowne moved the first reading of the 'Ecclesiastical Titles Bill' in the Upper House, the same peer moving the second reading on the 21st. Lord Aberdeen thought that it would be a good exercise of the royal prerogative to appoint Protestant Bishops to the new Sees. Lord Beaumont, a

<sup>1</sup> Brewing was not uncommon in private houses at the time.



Catholic, complained of the 'inflated, bombastic language' of Cardinal Wiseman and said it could not be left to the Pope or the Roman Catholic Church to decide what was spiritual. This led Lord Malmesbury to say that he would not have voted for the Bill if he had thought that it would hurt the feelings of Roman Catholics, but that fears on this score had been removed by Lord Beaumont's speech. The aged Duke of Wellington viewed with alarm 'the creation of an Archdiocese in a district which includes the Queen's Palace and the seat of the Legislature'. 'Clemency Canning', of Mutiny fame, said that usurpation meant the wrongful assumption of property belonging to another. The Pope had not done this but had only created a Hierarchy of his own Church. The Duke of Argyll believed the apparent progress of Catholicism in England to be the advance of a passing wave and not the advance of a rising tide, a surmise which unhappily proved to be true. Lord Lyndhurst, the former Tory Lord Chancellor, asserted that toleration as a principle was wholly alien to the Roman Catholic Church and quoted Gregory XVI's denunciation of freedom of conscience.

The Bill passed its second reading by 265 votes to 38. The majority included 16 dukes and 19 marquesses, besides 25 archbishops and bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland, including the Bishop of St. David's. The Bishop of Exeter still refused his support to the measure. Lord Camoys, a Catholic peer, would not vote for the Bill because it involved an injustice to Ireland, but he held that an outrage had been committed and that the Pope had violated the public law of Europe. The appointment of the Hierarchy would, he maintained, have fatal consequences for English Catholics. They had suffered in their social position and would now find it difficult to get jobs. Lord Mount-eagle moved that Ireland be excluded from the scope of the Bill, but the motion was lost by 82 votes to 17.

The 'Ecclesiastical Titles Bill' reached the Statute Book in August, by which time not only had public interest in it become moribund but the measure itself had been emasculated. The provisions, making void bequests in favour of those describing themselves as bishops of the new Sees and invalidating deeds executed in their names, were withdrawn. Only the clause imposing a fine of £100 for use of the prohibited titles remained, and when the Queen prorogued Parliament she expressed her satisfaction that religious liberty had not been interfered with.

From the day that it received the royal assent, the 'Ecclesiastical Titles Act' became a dead letter. Not a single prosecution took place under it and it has been since generally agreed that little credit was done to the 'Mother of Parliaments' by giving up days and hours of its time to debating so futile a measure. The episode provided an addition to English Catholic literature in the shape of Newman's *Lectures on the present position of Catholics in England*, which were first delivered to the Brothers of the Little Oratory in the summer of 1851. They are not perhaps to be reckoned among his greater works, but are a witty and acute, if longwinded, exposition of Protestant credulity where Catholics are concerned. To have possessed permanent value they should have contained an examination of the question as to how far English Catholics had themselves been responsible for the growth of a tradition so admittedly hostile towards them.

A further chapter in the history of the 'Ecclesiastical Titles Act' remained to be written. In 1869 a Bill disestablishing and disendowing the Protestant Church in Ireland reached the Statute Book. It was provided that the Act should come into effect on 1 January, 1871. In the meantime the Crown lawyers discovered that a Protestant Bishop appointed subsequently to the date when the Bill received the royal assent was liable to the penalties which had been designed to punish the Pope. On 28 April Mr. Gladstone, now Prime Minister, announced in reply to a question in Parliament that the repeal of the 'Ecclesiastical Titles Act' was a matter of urgency since a gentleman had been appointed to the Protestant See of Kilmore and that on 1 January of the next year it would become illegal for him to make use of the title.

A repeal measure was accordingly introduced into the House of Lords in the following month by Lord Kimberley. Had the Vatican Council not been sitting it might have passed into law unnoticed. But this circumstance gave stalwart Protestants an opportunity to set to work to whip up something of the old anti-papal feeling. The veteran Lord St. Leonards, a former Conservative Lord Chancellor, who had been indefatigable in his support of the earlier measure, said that he had made a compact with himself that if there were any attempt to repeal the Act he would oppose it and that Providence had prolonged his life so that he could keep his pledge. Russell, now an Earl and nearly eighty years of age, was still active in the Protestant cause and was soon to be congratulated by Bismarck for his support of the

*Kulturkampf*. He declared that in view of what was now happening in Rome he would oppose the measure unless it were amended in Committee. But Kimberley was able to reassure the House by declaring that he felt certain that no Roman Catholic prelate would be so ill-advised as to assume the title of 'Archbishop of Canterbury'.

Before the Bill reached its second reading in the Commons the definition of Papal Infallibility had taken place, and the pious Mr. Newdegate, who twenty years earlier had given the House lessons in Canon Law, now urged that there should be no repeal of the 'Ecclesiastical Titles Act' till the effect of the Vatican Decrees had been observed. In spite of his warnings the second reading was carried by 111 votes to 34. But the Bill failed to reach the Statute Book by the end of the session and had to be reintroduced by the Attorney-General in the following one. Russell now supported the repeal and the Bill received the royal assent on 24 July, 1871.

The presence in England of Bishops in communion with Rome taking native territorial titles came gradually to be accepted. *The Times*, which in 1850 could speak of the 'bishop' of Northampton, was content by 1878 to refer to the 'titular Bishop of Liverpool' and now seems content with the term 'Roman Catholic Bishop'. The Bishops of the Anglican Church not unnaturally took longer than any other section of their fellow-countrymen to grow reconciled to the change which came about a hundred years ago and perhaps they still feel aggrieved at it though they may have derived some small measure of satisfaction when Parliament erected Sees at Liverpool, Birmingham and Southwark, ignoring in fact that the Pope had already placed Bishops in these localities.

Archbishop Benson was particularly sensitive to the presence of a Catholic Archbishop at Westminster and once gave a witty expression to his feelings. His son and biographer, Mr. A. C. Benson, relates that his father told him that whenever he refused or hesitated to join a charitable society or to speak at a social function, the promoters always said to him 'We hope to get Cardinal Manning', or 'Cardinal Manning has consented to attend.' 'Just as,' the Archbishop added, 'when the dog won't eat his dinner, we call out "Puss, Puss".'<sup>1</sup>

The story we have narrated is one of the most curious in Parliamentary history, but its lessons will be lost if a Catholic reader draws from it no other conclusion than that Protestants are very foolish persons. Rather, should he ask himself whether a similar

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Archbishop Benson*, II, p. 585.

explosion may not one day occur. Social prejudice against Catholics in this country has declined enormously in the last hundred years. To a lesser degree religious and politico-religious hostility have diminished, though that they smoulder beneath the surface is from time to time brought home to us, as was illustrated by the degree of feeling stirred by the attempt to make the Anglican Communion rite look a little more Roman. Anglo-Catholicism has certainly made life more comfortable for Catholics by attracting to itself much of the animosity which would otherwise have been directed towards them. President Kruger, the German Kaiser and the German Führer have likewise drawn away unfriendly attention which might otherwise have been directed towards the Pope. Fear of Communism, on the other hand, will never become a national emotion, strong though it may be among the propertied classes, and, in the absence of any rival phobia, the 'No Popery' cry remains potentially the one which could rally the largest measure of enthusiasm in this country.

English Catholics, if they are wise, will carefully watch the political and religious heavens and while not putting credence in every fancied sign, take careful note of any serious premonition. When the next 'No Popery' outcry is raised in this country it will most likely come with great suddenness and at a time when the large majority of Catholics are least expecting it. A hundred years ago Englishmen were willing to go all lengths to show the Pope what they thought of him so long as the principle of religious freedom was not interfered with. When the next storm bursts it will be a more terrible one; for it will come in an hour when the nineteenth century conception of religious liberty is treated as a discarded fetish.

# CHRISTIAN CULTURE IN EASTERN EUROPE

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

THE question of our relations with Eastern Europe is the vital problem of the present generation, and it is a problem which in one way or another affects every aspect of politics and culture. The two world wars have destroyed the old European society with its pattern of independent sovereign states loosely controlled by military alliances and a balance of power. And the new system of intercontinental power *blocs* no longer has any use for Europe. It cuts Europe asunder like a knife; and not Europe alone, for the division runs through the middle of Germany and Austria, so that Eastern Germany belongs to the same political *bloc* as North China, and Western Germany goes with North America, Australia and Japan.

Now in theory this division follows the lines of political ideology and party allegiance. The peoples and fragments of peoples east of the line are supposed to be convinced adherents of Communism, while those to the west accept the principles of constitutional democracy. In reality, however, it is essentially a matter of political and military power. It is a military frontier between two empires, or between an empire and the states and territories that remain independent of it.

A military frontier of this kind does not necessarily correspond to a line of division between different forms of culture: indeed, it seldom does so. But in this case there is no doubt that behind the conflict in power politics there is a deeper ideological conflict between rival systems, and this ideological conflict tends to make the older cultural divergences between Eastern and Western Europe serve its purposes. In the past these divergences did not prevent the existence of a common European culture and a considerable amount of social and intellectual intercourse. But under the new political conditions cultural relations are becoming increasingly difficult, so that we are faced with the danger of the

two rival power systems becoming two hostile spiritual worlds with no bridge between them.

Hence it is our duty as Europeans and as Christians to do all in our power to understand what is happening in Eastern Europe and not to accept the crude, over-simplified versions of history which are so characteristic of the modern political ideologies. Unfortunately this is by no means easy for us in this country. Few of us know Eastern Europe, fewer still can read or speak its many languages, and still fewer are those who have any wide knowledge of its history and its cultural and religious traditions.

We have always been well aware of the importance of Russia, and we know something of the inner history of Russian culture owing to the riches of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russian literature which has been so widely translated. But between Russia and Germany and Turkey there are nearly a dozen European peoples of whom we know hardly anything, and whose whole history has been left out of the ordinary Englishman's education.

Consequently, when in 1917 the new Russia suddenly forced itself on the attention of the Western world, the mind of the English-speaking public was virgin soil prepared to receive any seed that was sown in it. Public opinion veered between the naïve anti-Bolshevism of the post-1917 period and the equally naïve acceptance of Communist propaganda in the later 'thirties and the war years. Although the period between the wars saw the re-emergence of the suppressed nationalities of Eastern Europe, the only one of them which attracted much public attention was Czechoslovakia, thanks to the leadership of President Masaryk whose ideas had so much in common with Western Liberalism. Throughout the whole time our main attention was focussed on Russia, and we never made full use of our opportunities during this period to become acquainted with the history and culture of the other states of Eastern Europe, which have been traditionally a part of Catholic Europe and have had far more in common with the West than Russia herself.

I do not wish to minimize the importance of Russia, for it is Russia that has dominated the whole development of events in Eastern Europe, and now threatens to dominate the world. But it is essential that we should not simplify this development by identifying Eastern Europe with Russia and assuming that Russia is typical of Eastern Europe as a whole. It is this tendency



that has led us to ignore or underestimate the importance of the Catholic element in the East. It is here that our general ignorance of Eastern European history has been so misleading. The average Englishman knows nothing of the great age of Catholic Eastern Europe. He does not realize that at the close of the Middle Ages, Poland and Hungary were great kingdoms which formed an integral part of Christendom and were by no means backward in culture as compared with the other states of Central and Northern Europe. Down to the sixteenth century Eastern Europe shared in the common cultural and religious life of Western Christendom; and the union of Poland with Lithuania from the fourteenth century onward pushed the frontiers of this international society far out into what we regard as Russia—beyond the Dvina and the Dnieper and right down to the Black Sea. In those days Hungary, Poland and Bohemia were constitutional monarchies which possessed an active political life more like that of England or Aragon than that of the East, and in the same way their culture was influenced by the universities of Western Europe and by the new ideas of the Italian Renaissance. During these centuries eastern and northern Russia had passed completely out of the orbit of European civilization. To the Westerner in that age Russia meant Lithuania or Polish Russia—i.e. White Russia and Galicia and the Ukraine. Muscovite Russia, which was the ancestor of the modern Russian state, lay beyond the ken of the West in the mysterious world of Tartary—the lands of the Great Khan and the Golden Horde, which came into contact with Europe only on its southern flank through the Italian trading colonies of the Crimea and the Sea of Azov. And so when the first Western travellers and ambassadors visited Moscow at the end of the fifteenth and in the early sixteenth century they were like explorers who had discovered an unknown land.

This rediscovery of Russia came at a moment when the development of the other peoples of Eastern Europe was checked by the new advance of Islam, which severed the Christian nations of the Balkans from the rest of Christendom for five centuries. In 1453 Constantinople became the capital of the Ottoman empire. In 1526 Hungary suffered a catastrophic defeat and Buda became a Turkish pashalik for 150 years. The mediaeval pattern of independent national kingdoms in South-Eastern Europe was replaced by two great military empires—the Ottoman power on the Bosphorus and the Hapsburg empire on the Middle Danube.

Now the latter was a dynasty rather than a state—a dynasty whose possessions were scattered all over Europe and were united only by loyalty to the Emperor and to the Church. Thus it was essentially international in character and recruited its servants from every part of Catholic Europe—Germans and Czechs, Italians and Irish, Spaniards and Belgians—in somewhat the same way as the Turks relied on Albanian and Greek viziers and recruited their army from the levy of Christian youths who formed the famous picked corps of Janissaries.

Thus among the mediaeval kingdoms of Eastern Europe Poland alone survived, and even for a time advanced in power and prosperity. During the sixteenth century, and the first decades of the seventeenth, Poland seemed destined to become the great power of Eastern Europe. By the union of the Polish and Lithuanian states at the Congress of Lublin in 1569, and the Union of the Churches at the Council of Brest in 1594, the Polish Republic acquired its definitive form as a constitutional elective monarchy of many races and religions which included the whole of Eastern Europe from the Turkish frontiers to those of the Hapsburg empire, and to the remote frontiers of the Muscovite empire in the far north. Had this experiment in federal constitutionalism proved successful, it would have changed the course of European history, since it represented a tradition that was diametrically opposed to that of the new military empires. Unfortunately the mediaeval tradition of constitutional government, which subjected the executive power to rigorous control, was ill-equipped for a struggle with the unfettered power of a military absolutism, and in the same way a system which favoured religious toleration was at a disadvantage in the age of the Thirty Years' War when the rest of Europe was divided into two religious camps. But in spite of all this Poland might have survived had it not been for the tendency of successive Polish governments to embark on ambitious imperialist schemes with inadequate military and economic resources. It was, perhaps, inevitable that Poland should have taken advantage of the state of anarchy which followed the period of Ivan the Terrible to intervene in Russian affairs and to extend the Union of Lublin by a union between Poland and Russia. But the fact that this scheme came so near to success in 1610–12 was responsible for a great revival of Russian national and religious patriotism, and was followed by a similar reaction among the Orthodox population within the Polish Republic, above all in the Ukraine.



Poland never recovered from this disaster, which marks the turning point in Eastern European history. For though the Cossack revolt of 1648 was a genuinely popular and even democratic movement which was inspired by the freedom of the steppes and aimed at an independent Ukrainian state, it actually resulted in the ruin of both the Ukraine and Poland to the benefit of Moscow. Slowly and irresistibly the Muscovite power advanced westward into Europe, and at the same time the influence of Western civilization began slowly and irresistibly to penetrate into Russia. It was a movement which resembled the penetration of Western culture into China and Japan in the seventeenth century. As J. B. Bury wrote, 'The process was not an internal development, but rather like the laying of a mine which did not outwardly affect the land till Peter the Great had the courage to explode it.' With tremendous hammer-blows of sword and axe and pick Peter cast the archaic oriental life of ancient Muscovy into the new mould of Western absolutism which found its centre and embodiment in the new Baltic capital built by forced labour in the swamps of the Neva. And this revolution was carried out in the course of the Great Northern War which lasted for twenty-one years and strained the resources of the new state to the uttermost limit of endurance.

Out of this crucible of intense effort and suffering there emerged the new European Russia which resembled neither the old Holy Russia of Muscovite tradition, nor the old Eastern European kingdoms of the Polish and Hungarian type. Although to Western eyes it still seemed a backward and barbarous power, it was in reality the first of the Enlightened Monarchies of the eighteenth century, since Peter the Great was a far more drastic innovator and a far more disinterested servant of the idea of the State than Louis XIV or Charles X of Sweden, or Frederick William of Prussia. It was he who launched not only Russia but the whole of Eastern Europe on a new path which had profound effects on the future development of the European state system.

For in modern times, in contrast to the Middle Ages, Eastern and Western Europe have followed divergent paths; and it is this divergence that has been one of the root causes of the catastrophic events of the present century. During the Middle Ages, Eastern Europe had followed a very similar line of development to that of the West. Latin Christendom had enlarged its boundaries to the East and North, bringing with it the same faith and culture, and the same education and law. In both regions the typical form of

state was a national monarchy limited by the system of representative estates and corporate liberties or privileges. In both the relations of Church and State were similar, and their religious and cultural institutions, such as the religious orders and the universities, were the same, though they were stronger and more numerous in the West.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries religious unity had been lost in both areas, but in the West the political tradition of the national monarchical state was still maintained. But the whole of Eastern Europe was now divided between four great military empires—Turkey, Russia, Austria and Prussia, which were superimposed on a number of subject peoples. The mass of the peasant population had, in many cases, sunk to a state of personal servitude lower than that which they had known in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, the rulers, except in Turkey, were in close contact with Western Europe, and were often themselves of Western origin, like Catherine the Great. They imitated Western fashions and manners, surrounded themselves with Western courts and ruled through Western ministers and generals.

The eighteenth century was the great age of Irish and Scottish soldiers of fortune—Patrick Gordon and Marshal Keith<sup>1</sup> and Peter Lacey in Russia, or Loudon and Browne<sup>2</sup> in Austria. It is typical of this cosmopolitan period that the reorganization of Southern Russia and the planning of Odessa was the work of the Duke of Richelieu, who was afterwards Prime Minister of France.

There has never been a system of government more detached from its roots in religion and nationality than that of the four Eastern European powers in the eighteenth century. It is true that each of them had its own official religion and its religious policy, but religion was habitually regarded as an instrument of government; even in Catholic Austria, Joseph II regarded the clergy as salaried state officials whose business it was to co-operate with the police in the service of the state. The idea that religion was an independent spiritual power to which even kings must bow seemed preposterous or out of date.

Never, in fact, has the game of power politics been played with more cool unscrupulousness and virtuosity than by those en-

<sup>1</sup> J. F. E. Keith, brother of the 10th Earl Marischal, served in the Spanish army, commander of the Russian armies in the Turkish and Swedish wars, field-marshal under Frederick the Great, and Governor of Berlin, killed at Hochkirch, 1758.

<sup>2</sup> Ulysses, Count von Browne, 1705-1757, to be distinguished from George, Count Browne, 1698-1792, who was in the Russian service.

lightened despotisms. As Frederick the Great wrote to his minister on the eve of the War of the Austrian Succession: 'The question of *Right* is the affair of the ministries: that is *your* affair. Go ahead with it, for the orders to the troops have been given' (November 1740).

And it is remarkable that while the general level of culture was lower in the East than in the West, the ablest and most successful of the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century were to be found not in the West, but in Eastern Europe. Rulers like Peter I and Catherine II in Russia, Frederick the Great in Prussia and Joseph II in Austria, were the creators of a new state system which endured until 1914, and has left its mark even on the Europe that we know. It was characteristic of this order that, though the great powers were engaged in a constant diplomatic and military struggle, they all (with the exception of Turkey, of course) were animated by the same ideas and shared a common type of court culture, the international character of which is to be seen in the palaces and public buildings of Petersburg and Berlin and Vienna.

And the same community of type is to be seen in their military organization. In this sphere they were pioneers and their transformation of military technique is hardly less important for modern history than the Western transformation of technique in industry. For as Professor K. Mannheim has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> the military organization of the absolutist states is the first great institution for the artificial production of uniform mass behaviour, which is one of the fundamental conditions of the modern totalitarian state.

The problem these states had to solve was how to create an absolutely reliable military machine out of forced levies of illiterate peasant-serfs, whose whole interest was centred in their farm and their village and their Church, and who often belonged to a different nationality and language-group from their rulers. The problem was most difficult for Russia, for its conscript armies had to be trained often by foreign mercenaries and always in foreign methods of drill and warfare, so that they should be capable of facing the national and professional armies of the West, above all that of Sweden, which united the *esprit de corps* of the professional soldier with a strong sense of nationality and a spirit of patriotic duty. At the cost of superhuman efforts and a complete disregard for human life and liberty, Peter the Great succeeded, and his achievements were so impressive that the Western states, in spite

<sup>1</sup> K. Mannheim, *Man and Society*, p. 255 (1940).

of their sense of cultural superiority, became his pupils and imitators.

The result of this achievement for Eastern Europe itself was nothing less than a profound change in spiritual values. The new army was the creator of the new state, and it took the place of the Church as the dynamic element in Eastern European society. Hitherto even in the West the rationalized planning of the statesmen and officials had affected only the upper surface of society and the life of the peasant and the local village community had continued to follow its traditional way of life. But men like Peter the Great and Frederick the Great took hold of the whole social system and made it the instrument of their ruthless political will and intelligence.

And this was the more far-reaching in its effects because it was not yet limited by the national consciousness which had become so strong in the West. Throughout Eastern Europe the imperialism of the great powers produced an extraordinary intermixture of national minorities which were redistributed and shifted about according to the will of the rulers. How striking this difference was from what was known in the West may be seen in the following passage from a Scottish diplomat, Robert Keith Murray, whose business took him through the frontier territories of Hungary and Turkey at the end of the eighteenth century. 'One very strange thing,' he writes, 'is remarked by every traveller through the Banat. The villages are large, though distant, and we meet by turns Wallachian, German, Schlavonian and *French*, nay even *Italian* villages: the inhabitants of which have different languages, religions, manners, features and modes of garment; having no other intercourse with one another than that of mere necessity, and *never intermarrying*. A dash of the Gipsy nation and a sprinkling of Jews are met with everywhere, and the whole furnishes a grotesque and singular variety.'<sup>1</sup>

These conditions also obtained in the new lands of Southern Russia, which were colonized in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and on the frontiers of Russia and the Polish Lithuanian state, where they were of long standing. Indeed in many parts of Eastern Europe the intermingling of races tended to produce a sort of régime of fixed castes, so that the different social functions were performed by different peoples; a Magyar, Polish or Russian governing class of landlords, Rumanian, Slovak

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir Robert Murray Keith*, II, 309 (1844).

or White Russian peasant serfs, German townspeople and artisans, and Jewish pedlars and agents.

The effect of this combination of local intermixture and social segregation and specialization was to increase the gulf between the life of the peasant community and the sophisticated cosmopolitan culture of the courts and the capitals. This was most striking in Russia, where the small class which had received Western education regarded itself as a European colony among barbarians. And this cleavage between the French-speaking German-trained ruling class and the servile masses was the more unfortunate because it replaced the natural and healthy process of cultural contact between the neighbouring peoples of Eastern Europe through which Polish culture had reached Russia by way of the Ukraine and Lithuania in the seventeenth century.

Thus the rise of the new absolute state not only meant a change in the spiritual balance of power and the increasing predominance of the new powers of Russia and Prussia: it also meant that religion had everywhere become subordinated to the state and occupied both a smaller and a lower place in social life. In fact the attitude of the enlightened despotisms towards the religion of their subjects was not unlike that of the Western colonial powers towards the religion and culture of oriental peoples.

Even the Austrian Empire, which was the one remaining Catholic power in Eastern Europe, was not exempt from this change, since the reforms of Joseph II went far to make the Church in the Austrian dominions an instrument of the bureaucratic state, and the one great independent organ of Catholic culture in the Counter-Reformation period, the Society of Jesus, had already been destroyed by the action of the Catholic powers themselves.

The case of Prussia is more complex. On the one hand, it is the most perfect example of the new type of rationalized military absolutism—the most completely military in origin and the most efficient in its soulless bureaucratic despotism. And it had the good or evil fortune to be ruled by two perfect examples of their respective types—Frederick William I, the crowned sergeant-major, and Frederick the Great, the most enlightened of the enlightened despots. Yet at the same time Prussia even in the eighteenth century had a dual character. She faced westward as well as eastward, and it was through her expansion to the West, and her eventual alliance with Western German nationalism,



that she ultimately reached her full stature as a great European power.

This dual development was of epoch-making importance for both Eastern and Western Europe. In the East, Prussia was the representative of Western efficiency and Western science; while to the West she revealed new possibilities of power, not only in war and military organization, but in the idea of the State itself as the supreme principle of social and economic organization. It is no accident that Karl Marx was a Prussian, though he was a Prussian of the West. And the impatient contempt he shows for the backwardness and barbarism of the East, and for the individualism and indiscipline of the West, is just like that of the traditional type of Prussian officer or bureaucrat.

It was the rise of Prussia which completed the modern state-system of Eastern Europe. While Western Europe was undergoing a far-reaching process of political change, and bourgeois liberalism and constitutionalism was everywhere supreme, Eastern Europe was immobilized under the firm grip of the three great military powers whose mutual co-operation remained the corner-stone of the Eastern European system from the days of Metternich to those of Bismarck, in spite of the fact that Germany itself was the scene of intense rivalry and conflict between Austria and Prussia.

However much the three empires might disagree they remained tied together by their common responsibility, and their common share in the partition of Poland. This was the keystone of the imperialist order in Eastern Europe, and the Three Partitions determined the character of the age and the society in Eastern Europe, in the same way as the English, the American and the French Revolutions determined the character of the liberal order and the bourgeois society in the West.

It is true that these Western movements were not without their influence in the East. They reawakened the demand for freedom and the cult of national traditions, not only in Poland, but also in Hungary, Bohemia and the Balkans. This renaissance of the old national traditions was everywhere accompanied and strengthened by a religious revival, which was also of Western origin, and which challenged the control of religion and culture by the State. In Germany the great struggle between the Church and Bismarck was already foreshadowed by the conflict which united the Catholics of the Rhineland and the Polish provinces in their resistance to the Prussian government during the '30s. In

Austria the Church began to react against the tradition of Josephinism. In Poland the Catholic Church kept alive the traditions of Polish culture against both German and Russian pressure, while even in Russia itself the Slavophiles, in spite of their exaggerated nationalism, made a real effort to recover the spiritual independence of the Orthodox Church and to resist the secularization of Russian society by a Westernized and German-educated bureaucracy. The great achievements of Russian literature in this age, from the time of Gogol onwards, owes much to values of the old Christian tradition and to the stimulus of the conflict between Western secular enlightenment and Christian traditionalism: though we must not forget the existence and the influence of Western religion, whether Catholic, as with Chadaev and Soloviev, or Protestant, as with Tolstoi and many less well-known but more orthodox thinkers.<sup>1</sup>

But the intellectual and spiritual revival of Eastern Europe which produced such brilliant results in the inner world of literature and ideas was denied any outlet in world of political and social action by the iron hand of Tsarist autocracy which was never heavier or more harsh than during the reign of Nicholas I (1825-1855). Consequently the new forces in Russian society were driven underground and forced to seek expression in subterranean revolutionary channels. Never was the influence of the West stronger than in these years, but since there was no room in Russia for Western liberalism of the parliamentary type, it was the most revolutionary elements in Western thought which had the deepest influence on the Russian mind. All through the nineteenth century this underground movement of resistance continued to develop, fed by the propaganda of political exiles like Herzen, Bakunin and Tkachev, and occasionally exploding in outbursts of terrorist activity. Under these conditions 'Western' ideas no longer acted as a bridge between Russia and the rest of Europe; they became an explosive force which widened the gap between them. Thus when the Tsarist empire finally collapsed as a result of the first world war, this tradition of uncompromising revolutionary extremism proved too strong for the liberal democratic elements represented by the Provisional Government and its victory divided Russia from the West more completely than Tsarism had ever done.

<sup>1</sup> As early as the eighteenth century St. Tychon of Zadonsk translated or adapted a work by the seventeenth-century Bishop of Norwich, Joseph Hall.

It was the hope of Western idealists like President Wilson and idealists in Eastern Europe like President Masaryk that the new order which followed the fall of the three military empires would adopt the same pattern of liberal constitutional national democracy as existed in the West, and that East and West would co-operate in the creation of a democratic world order which would find its organ in the League of Nations.

Actually they proved wrong. The tradition of absolutism was stronger than they realized, and out of the ruin of the old empires there arose the far more formidable and inhuman power of the totalitarian state.

There is no need to insist on the momentous character of this development. It is the one point on which there is no difference of opinion between totalitarians and anti-totalitarians. Both sides agree that it marks a complete break alike with the existing democratic or capitalist order in Western Europe, and also with the old Christian culture of Eastern Europe, whether Catholic or Orthodox. Everything else, however, is a matter of controversy. For though it can hardly be denied that the new type of state involves dictatorship, the identification of state and party, and the institution of a more rigorous form of police control than anything known hitherto; these are features which the Communist state shares with National Socialism, and it is well known that Communists and Nazis have both repudiated the idea of their fundamental community of type, which seems obvious to us in the West.

But it is when we come to the fundamental question of origins and ends that the conflict of opinion becomes most acute. The Communist is bound by his creed to interpret the revolution in orthodox Marxian terms as the inevitable product of the class conflicts of capitalist society; so that it belongs to Western Europe and America as much as, or even more than, it does to the East, because it was in the West that bourgeois capitalism developed first and transformed society most completely. But during the last century Western society has been steadily finding its own solutions to its problems, which were not those that Marx predicted. The Communist revolution came in the East as a result of a particular Eastern European development which Karl Marx had never envisaged.

For the totalitarian state is not a transitional stage in the evolution of the Marxian ideal of a classless society. It is a monstrous



hybrid born from the unnatural union of the Western revolutionary tradition and the Eastern tradition of the military police state. The Marxian dialectic of class war may be the source of its ideology and its propaganda, but the real sources of its political power are to be found in the techniques of absolute bureaucratic government and military mass control that were developed by the three great empires of Eastern Europe during the last two or three centuries.

This may seem a paradox, but we cannot ignore the fact that Eastern European society had been subjected to a severe and intensive process of mass conditioning which could not fail to leave its mark on men's thought and behaviour. While the Western peoples were developing the new industrial techniques and the new capitalist order of trade and finance, the Eastern peoples were being drilled in quite a different school by the professional soldiers and police officers of the giant Eastern monarchies. These powers had gone so far to transform the social pattern, and held such a large place in Eastern European life, that their sudden collapse created a void which was felt even by those who had suffered from their power and had longed for their downfall. It was like the case of the man in the parable out of whom an evil spirit had been expelled, and who remained an empty house, swept and garnished, until he was invaded by seven other devils stronger than the first. There was a change of personnel and a change of class, but the old techniques of autocracy and mass power were reinforced and not diminished.

In Russia the autocracy left its half-way house in Peter the Great's new capital and went back to Moscow and the Kremlin. This retreat, together with the collapse of the other two empires, made it possible for the old peoples of Eastern Europe to re-emerge and to regain their long-lost national sovereignty. But this was only a momentary episode. The political renaissance of the Eastern European states was cut short by the rise of a second totalitarian state—the German Third Reich.

This was another example of the same process as that which had transformed the Tsarist autocracy into the Communist dictatorship. The Weimar Republic, as its name suggests, represented the anti-militarist, anti-Prussian, Western, liberal, democratic elements in the German tradition. But Hitler and the National Socialist movement deliberately turned their backs on the West, and revived the tradition of the Prussian army and the Prussian

state, together with the ideal of imperial expansion in Eastern Europe (cf. *Mein Kampf* passim). They did in fact recreate the old militarist power-state in a new modernized streamlined mechanized form. And the constitutionalist national states of Eastern Europe were unable to oppose the converging pressure of these two reorganized mass powers. History has never repeated itself more dramatically than when Hitler and Stalin followed in the footsteps of Frederick and Catherine the Great and concluded the agreement for the partition of Poland which led to the world war, and thus ultimately to the partition of Germany itself and to the division of Europe.

But the most serious result of the two wars and of the rise of the new total power-state in Eastern Europe is that it has changed the whole pattern of political organization and the climate of culture in the world as a whole. Everywhere the threat of the totalitarian state and the prestige of the totalitarian ideal of mass planning have led to a great change of the balance of power as between the state and the individual, and to the narrowing or elimination of that margin of freedom, thanks to which the higher forms of culture have been able to grow and bear fruit.

One thing remains, however: the Christian kingdom of faith, the sphere of spiritual freedom—and so long as this remains intact there is still hope for the world. Now it is at this point that the immense importance of the Catholic tradition in Eastern Europe is to be seen. The sixty million—or whatever the number may be—of Catholics in Eastern Europe stand in the front line of the struggle which will decide the fate of humanity. In Poland and the Baltic states they have long been inured to resistance under the rule of alien empires of a different faith, and so, too, have been the Orthodox population of the Balkan countries under Turkish rule. But in both these cases they were supported in the past by their national loyalties and the possession of independent traditions of culture which their rulers did not, as a rule, attempt to interfere with. Now they are being deprived of both these supports, since it is in the field of culture that the pressure of the totalitarian state is felt most directly, while Communism at least has also found a method by which it can make use of Nationalism as its instrument instead of suppressing it, a method which is an immense source of strength to the system and which, I think, deserves more study than it has received.

Consequently the Catholics of Eastern Europe have to rely

almost entirely on their spiritual resources in order to survive—a situation which tests the spiritual quality of a community more than most people realize. At the same time they have to face the extraordinarily subtle and confusing technique, which avoids open attacks on religion as such, but makes use of any handy pretext to eliminate the individuals or groups that occupy key positions in the Churches. We have seen this method at work in Hungary and Bulgaria, and now in Czechoslovakia and Poland, and the difference in the objects of these attacks shows how much more flexible is the new technique of aggression than the traditional type of open religious persecution.

In the long run, however, it seems certain that the Catholic Church will be the main object of attack, not only because the Catholic nationalities and the Catholic minorities represent independent traditions which are opposed to the tradition of Russian imperialism, but still more because they belong to an organic super-national order which is irreconcilable with the form and spirit of the totalitarian state.

No doubt the Orthodox Church, and most of all perhaps the Orthodox Church in Russia, possesses a rich and deep tradition of popular Christian life. But this tradition has never been able to assert itself successfully when it is brought into direct conflict with the temporal power. Its strength is passive, and when it is forced to adopt an attitude of resistance it is apt to lose all contact with social reality, as we see in the case of the Old Believers.

On the other hand the Catholic Church in the East as in the West has always shown itself ready to face the facts of the situation and to adapt its action to the needs of its environment. Above all, its attitude to differences of rite which have always played so great a part in Orthodox and Oriental Christianity is a remarkable proof of the flexibility of the Catholic tradition and of its readiness to sacrifice externals to spiritual essentials; in contrast to the rigidity of a man like Avvakum who was prepared to die a thousand deaths and did actually suffer martyrdom rather than make the sign of the cross with three fingers instead of two.

For this reason it is the Catholics of the Uniat rites who have always been the first to be attacked and the most bitterly persecuted of all the Catholics in Eastern Europe. Apart from Russia itself, this is the case in Rumania today and probably elsewhere if one only knew more of what was happening. The situation of these Uniat minorities in Eastern Europe is as difficult as can well

be imagined, since they have to contend not only against the pressure of the totalitarian system, but also against the local pressure of their fellow Christians with whom they are united by rite and religious and national traditions, and from whom they are divided only by their obedience to the Holy See. If under these circumstances they maintain their position, they are bearing a double witness to the cause of Catholic faith and unity. They, above all, are the men who hold open the door between East and West, like the Church in Asia Minor to which St. John wrote: 'Behold I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it. Because thou hast a little strength and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name.'

The case of Cardinal Mindszenty has shown how deeply Catholics in the West—and not Catholics alone—feel about the dangers to which the Church in the East is exposed, and the more we can prove our solidarity with the Catholics of Eastern Europe the more shall we increase their powers of resistance. It is, therefore, important to do all in our power to increase our knowledge of everything that concerns the interests of Catholics in these lands, because the more we know the more fully can we make our solidarity with them a living reality, and the greater will be the spiritual contribution we can make to help them. For it is by spiritual forces and not by diplomatic or political action that these issues will be decided.

I only wish we could know more about the sacrifices and sufferings of the rank and file of the Christian people. For what led to the triumph of the Church over the Pagan empire more than 1600 years ago was not merely the blood of the martyrs but the way in which the men and women who suffered for the faith—even if they were slaves or foreigners—became the objects of popular interest and admiration all over the Roman world, as happens only with film stars nowadays.

The state of things today is very different. Indeed the most serious feature of the modern form of persecution is that it is aimed with diabolical cunning and persistence against the very spirit of martyrdom itself. For the trial of the Christians as we see it today culminates not in the martyr's witness and his glorious death, but in a voluntary confession which is intended to deprive him and his cause of moral prestige, followed by his condemnation to a secret imprisonment or a secret execution. In this respect the spiritual totalitarianism of Communism goes much further than that of the

Nazis. A long series of state trials has proved that the normal human will is incapable of resisting the pressure that can be brought to bear upon it by the new techniques of Communist justice.

This is a disquieting fact for those who value spiritual freedom—and most of all for Christians, who have always looked to the witness of the martyrs as a standing proof of the unconquerable strength of the faith. It is inconceivable that the Church should be deprived of this ultimate resource or that any mass power of state or party should be strong enough to overcome the Christian conscience and make the free will its passive slave. *But it is this issue that is now being put to the test in Eastern Europe.*

It is clear enough, I think, that the new form of persecution is different in kind from anything known in the past. It is not a question of purely physical pressure, of the use of torture or even drugs, though I do not suppose the security police would draw the line at such things. But the real weapon is a more formidable one, and it is by the scientific and systematic use of direct psychological pressure that most of these voluntary confessions are obtained.

Now it is not altogether surprising if the new mass societies should have discovered methods unknown in a more individualistic type of society to weaken or destroy the autonomy of the individual mind, and to make it accept passively the beliefs and suggestions that are backed with the weight of social authority. Joseph de Maistre wrote long ago of the French Revolution that the lightest opinion of the revolutionary party was like a battering-ram with twenty million wills behind it. I don't know how far he realized the implications of what he said, but if a million men can defeat a thousand men in war as soon as they are properly organized, so it would seem a million wills can subdue an individual will, if the latter is confronted, not with an impersonal law administered by an impartial institution as in the Western tradition, but with an organized mass which corresponds psychologically to the unified physical mass power of a disciplined army.

And it is historically appropriate that the Eastern Europe great powers, which were the first to develop the external techniques of mass conditioning in the military state, should now be the first to develop a psychological technique of mass conditioning in the new totalitarian forms of people's courts and party justice and law.

But in proportion as the techniques of totalitarian power be-



come psychological and internal, the nearer do they approach the frontiers of the spiritual world. Although we may not be able to see at the moment how the threat to spiritual freedom by mass psychological pressure is to be met, it is clear that in the long run the spiritual power will find an answer to it on its own spiritual level, and that it is here that the issue will be decided.

When the war ceases to be one with flesh and blood and becomes a war with *power* itself, with what St. Paul calls 'the world rulers of the darkness of the age', then no Christian can doubt that the Church still possesses a reserve of spiritual resources which is stronger than any power the totalitarian state can appeal to.

No doubt it will be necessary for the Church to develop new spiritual tactics to meet the new situation. At the moment it is the opponents of Christianity who have taken the initiative. They can bring to bear forces which transcend the level of the individual, and which are more palpable and even more apparently effective than the spiritual forces which are remote from sensible experience and can only be seen by the eye of faith. But the latter are no less real and no less powerful—they are of course infinitely *more* powerful, since the new Leviathan with all its powers and terrors is a spiritual power of a very low order—a monster of the deep, the creature of a moment which derives its strength from human evil and human ignorance. The task of the present time is to find the new spiritual weapons and tactics that are appropriate to this new situation. Perhaps it is hardly even a question of new spiritual weapons, but merely a matter of sharpening the old spiritual weapons which have been allowed to grow rusty during the long periods during which Christians have become unaccustomed to the prospect of martyrdom and to the problems of active persecution.

Meanwhile the Christians of Eastern Europe are bearing the full brunt of the struggle. And of course this is not a new situation. Again and again in history Eastern Christendom has been more exposed to attack than we have been in the West, and it has had to suffer for the Church as a whole. Right back in the time of the Roman Empire, the greatest persecutions which the Church endured had their centre in Eastern Europe. It was the army of the Danube and its leaders, the Illyrian emperors, who were responsible for the most formidable attack on Christianity; it was the Eastern provinces that contributed the greatest number of



martyrs, and it was at Sofia that the freedom of the Church was finally won by the Edict of Sardica (in 311).

We do not know what the issue of the present conflict will be. It is possible that what we see today is only the beginning of a long struggle which will be fought out in the West as well as in the East. At the present moment it is for us to assert our solidarity with the faithful in Eastern Europe, and not to allow ourselves to be misled or confused by the attempts of the persecutors to isolate their victims and to deprive them of their greatest strength and reward—their Christian witness.

# THE SPIRITUALITY OF DESCARTES

By JACQUES CHEVALIER

THE Spirituality of Descartes: the phrase might be calculated to shock those of our time—or, for that matter, of any time since the eighteenth century—who insist on hailing Descartes as the inventor of a method of thought they call 'modern': meaning by this, of course, a method that has given man full control over matter, fundamentally unconcerned with the things of the spirit or religion. But it is certainly a fact that this presentation of Descartes—or rather this distortion of him—has had the effect of shocking all who believe in truth, who own an allegiance to it, and find it hard to imagine such presumption and bad faith as would twist the truth to serve passion or prejudice. Hence the indignation of Gabriel Marcel at that session of the Sorbonne in May 1946, when (as he put it) a French university was made the abettor of a shameless lie. 'No philosopher worthy of the name,' he wrote next day, 'would admit that Descartes can be ranked with the materialists, or *a fortiori* with the precursors of Marxism. A free-thinking Descartes, giving prudent pledges to official religion, is a fatuous legend impossible to take seriously.'

A more subtle theory is that of those who, taking a hint from Fontenelle, pretend that all we have to do is to adopt the rules of the new reasoning, taught us by Descartes, and we can then invalidate his actual philosophy, or deprive it, at any rate, of all its certainty. Somewhat similar is the contention of Jean-Paul Sartre, and others, who maintain man has only to recover that creative freedom, confined by Descartes to God, and he can give to being its rightful foundation in freedom—the essential basis of humanism as Sartre understands it.

There can be no question that such a procedure is fundamentally untrue to the mind of Descartes, and to his spirituality. This, like the spirituality of Bérulle, is essentially (what Brémond calls) 'theocentric'. But even this is contested by some Catholic

thinkers—and these by no means the least important. Pascal himself declared: 'I can never forgive Descartes: what he really wanted to do was to banish God from his philosophy entirely; but he could not get on without a fillip (*chiquenaude*) from God to set the world in motion; once that was done, God had nothing left to do.' In our day, Fr. Laberthonnière asserts that Descartes' sole end was to make us masters and possessors of nature, and the only use he had for God was to supply some ground and justification for his physics. As for Jacques Maritain, he reproaches Descartes for making man a pure spirit, and it is precisely in this Cartesian 'angelism' that he sees France's major sin against the spirit!

The question, therefore, requires close examination, and before we can understand the spirituality of Descartes we must try to define, as exactly as possible, his fundamental intentions.<sup>1</sup>

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Recent works devoted to Descartes—notably, in France, those of Etienne Gilson, Jean Laporte and Henri Gouhier—have emphasized his 'realism' (in the medieval sense of the term); they have shown how much the author of the *Discourse on Method* owed to the great tradition of the Middle Ages, which he took up again and continued, renewing it by the use he made of 'analysis' to trace effects back to their causes, the 'me' to God. There is much to be learnt from these studies. But to gain a real understanding of Descartes, it is even better to go to Descartes himself, and first of all to these writings in which he has given us the fundamentals of his thought: the *Cogitationes Privatae* of his youth, which have been made available to us by his biographer, the Abbé Adrien Baillet; the *Replies to Objections against the Meditations*; the conversation with Burman of the *Gottingen Manuscript*; and finally the *Letters*. In those addressed to his friend Père Mersenne, to the Princess Elizabeth, or to Chanut, the French ambassador in Sweden, he reveals the principles of his philosophy and the rules he has always observed in his studies.

Well, what do we find there?

First of all, the man's sincerity is obvious. Of this there can be no doubt at all. *Larvatus prodeo*, he wrote, in a much-abused note

<sup>1</sup> For support of the arguments here advanced, and for all references to the standard edition of the Works of Descartes by Adam and Tannery, the reader is referred to my book on *Descartes*, published by Plon in 1921 (new edition, with appendix, 1942); to '*Descartes et le Monde Moderne*' in *Cadences* (Plon); and to my edition of the *Lettres de Descartes sur la Morale* (Boivin). The index to my *Descartes* will make reference easy.

he made in his youth. But the 'mask' he donned was not a mask of hypocrisy; it was a mask of timidity. Descartes, 'the most passionate of men' (as Maurice Barrès called him), used this mask to cover his face when he was to appear on the world's stage: just as comedians do, he tells us, to conceal their blushes. We may disapprove of his way of 'setting aside' the truths of the faith; his attitude towards religion may be less commendable than Pascal's, though in actual fact the two are complementary; but there is no contesting the sincerity of his religious convictions, his fidelity to tradition or his obedience to the Church; there is no denying the firm attachment of his mind to God. Impudent attacks on God always aroused his wrath. His own attitude was always one of submission, the generous submission so naturally allied to the virtue of humility. We know that in 1624 his piety prompted him to make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Loreto, the accomplishment of a vow he had made five years before, in thanksgiving to God for the enlightenment and guidance he had received in his search for truth. We know, too, that during the twenty years of his life he spent in Holland, as 'the most zealous of Roman Catholics' (so the Protestant Saumaise described him), he always chose to reside in centres of Catholic culture; and Baillet, in the moving account he has left us of his death,<sup>1</sup> tells us with what devotion he received the ministrations of Père Viogué: 'in a fervent desire', Chanut tells us, 'to see unveiled, and to possess, that truth which all his life he had been seeking.'

As for the fundamental unity underlying his philosophy, this is no less undeniable. It is strictly bound up with the sincerity that belonged to him as a man, and with the respect for truth that distinguished him as a philosopher. It was this respect for truth that explains his constant striving to distinguish the really *true* from the false or merely probable; it was this that bound him to his rule of affirming nothing to be true that he did not plainly *know* to be true. Actually his whole doctrine—a single unity like the intelligence that begot it—is merely the unfolding of that simple intuition, received at Martinmas in 1619, in the course of his famous triple dream. This intuition revealed to him his *being* in relation to God: *Cogito, ergo sum. Sum, ergo Deus est*. I think, I am, God is—so said Descartes, like St. Teresa of Avila, like Newman. Or, to be more explicit: there exist within us—that is, within the soul—the seeds of wisdom, to be cultivated, not so much by philo-

<sup>1</sup> At Stockholm, in 1650. His tercentenary was celebrated on 11 February.

sophical reason as by poetic intuition; this intuition develops the seeds by means of the natural relation between what is sensible and what is intelligible; finally, freed from error by means of 'methodic doubt', it attains a knowledge guaranteed to be true by the Spirit of Truth itself, which is God. There we have the germ of the whole Cartesian system: the method, the *Cogito*, the innate ideas, the analytical geometry and mathematical physics, the existence of God and divine truth, and lastly the infinite wisdom that is the goal of all philosophy, with its first principle in God.

The important significance of this great philosophical system was first appreciated by Cardinal Bérulle, the founder of the Oratory and Descartes' spiritual director. We know from Baillet the circumstances in which Bérulle determined Descartes' vocation. At a reception given by the papal nuncio Bagno, in November 1628, a certain Sieur de Chandoux (subsequently condemned to the gallows for forgery) was expounding his ideas for a reformation of philosophy. Their boldness and superficial brilliance made a considerable impression on the other guests; but not on Descartes. Bérulle, observing this, invited Descartes to expound his views, which he did with much brilliance, easily refuting his opponent. He pointed out, very cogently, that Chandoux' method was of no more worth than that of the scholastics it proposed to replace: it threw no light on any of the essential difficulties. But it might not be impossible, he added, to establish clearer and more certain philosophical principles, such as would make it easier for the reason to account for the workings of nature. Very much struck by this debate, Bérulle recognized in Descartes no barren innovator but one who was a real reformer in the truest sense. He invited him to come and see him. And it was in the course of this visit that Descartes explained to him the general scheme of his ideas, with their possible application to medicine and mechanics, and not least to ethics. The Cardinal urged him to carry out his project; he made it, indeed, an obligation of conscience not to waste those powers of intellect allotted him by God, gifts for which a strict account would have to be rendered. The blessing of God, added the Cardinal, would surely further his enterprise. So Descartes determined then and there to follow Bérulle's advice, which agreed so well with his own inclinations; and it was then he decided to seek solitude in Holland in circumstances favourable to the execution of his great design.

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Of this design, the centre, principle and end is God. It is from God that Descartes' philosophy, not less than his spirituality, derives all its value and solid worth. The reason for this is because in truth there is but one God; because his existence is the first, the most essential, the most certain of all truths—the truth from which all others proceed; and finally because God is the sole author upon which all things, in their essence and existence, depend; on him they depend for their being and preservation; on him depends the order established in nature and the soul, the relation of the sensible world of extension to the intelligible world of pure quantity; both science, therefore, and wisdom, the true and the good; and finally the existence and immortality of the soul—our guarantee of eternal happiness.

It follows from this that, if God is the total cause of all that is—the foundation of all certitude and wisdom, and the principle upon which all things depend—then our only means of knowledge is through him. Thus the knowledge of truth by its first causes—the sovereign good to which we are drawn by the right use of reason: in other words, the knowledge of God—is both the *principle* and *goal* of all our thought, and of the substance in which our thought immediately resides: namely the soul, *mens*, which constitutes the *ego*, the principal part of man and the thing that is far more evident to us, more *present*, than the body or anything external to ourselves.

So, whatever Pascal may have said (and others who have attached baser implications to his doctrine) Descartes certainly never 'did without' God: he never 'paid him off'. Nor, as certain rigid Thomists have accused him of doing, did he turn the structure of thought upside down. In making God the principle of all things—which, according to St. Paul<sup>1</sup> is a perfectly legitimate statement of the truth—he also made him the goal of all things: for God, in his view, is at once the efficient and the final cause of the universe, and the recognition of the first, so far from implying a denial of the second, is rather a guarantee of its truth—the truth of that goal which is beyond our reach: *Dei fines nos latent*.

From this it is also clear—contrary to what has been suggested—that Descartes' true aim was not the conquest of the world but the mastery of the self: in other words, he sought the wisdom and happiness that come from the knowledge and love of God. We know from the testimony of Clerselier, the man who knew him

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i, 20.



best, and from Baillet's biography, that his most everyday meditations were on morals and metaphysics: this was his first and continual preoccupation; so much so, indeed, that from 1623 onwards, he abandoned geometry to devote himself wholly to the art of right-living: using the powers of his reason in an attempt to know himself, and in an attempt to know God, the master of the house we dwell in. Even physics, as he confessed to Chanut, served him principally to establish a sure foundation for ethics: for here he could find an easier and more certain means to happiness than the mere preserving of life: namely, by loving and trusting God, to banish the fear of death.

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From this point onwards everything becomes clear: we can understand in their true significance the various steps of his approach to the Spirit of Truth. First of all, methodic doubt: that 'dark night of the soul'. Its function, Descartes tells us, is to release the human spirit from the tyranny of the senses, from pride, and from the 'evil genius'—the three chief obstacles to the knowledge of God. Then, once these obstacles are removed, there comes the upward soaring to 'intuitive knowledge'. This he defines well, in Augustinian terms, as 'an illumination of the mind, by which it beholds in the light of God the things it seeks to discover, by a direct impression of divine clarity upon the understanding—the latter being no longer considered as an agent, but merely as a recipient of the rays of Divinity'.<sup>1</sup> So too with the *I think*. Here a simple inspection of the mind reveals immediately and infallibly the fact of thinking: the fact of substantial existence, the indissoluble link of thought to being, and lastly the substantial union of body and soul, together with their real distinction—the ground of the soul's immortality. Parallel to this, the 'obstacles' once removed, a direct and simple intuition makes it possible to grasp, in the double fact of (a) my *imperfection* and (b) the *feeling* of this imperfection, the existence of the perfect Being, which is God. The idea of this perfect Being derives from my very feeling of imperfection. Owing to my evident imperfection I could not be the author of this perfect Being; for it is a principle manifested by the natural reason that the perfect cannot be produced by the imperfect, any more than being by nothingness; and even where the perfection of the effect seems to surpass that of the cause (as with the insect in the cheese) it is simply because we are

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Marquess of Newcastle, March 1648.

ignorant of the total causality. If my eye were clear I should consider God without proofs: I should perceive that it is not because I think him that God exists, but it is because he exists that I think him: the idea being the effect, not the cause, of that Being whose existence is necessarily implied by his essence or idea. 'All I should have to do,' says Descartes, at the end of the third Meditation, 'would be to contemplate, wonder at, and adore the unmatched beauty of this intense light—in so far, that is, as the powers of my dazzled spirit would permit.'

First the service of God, *Dieu premier servi*, said Joan of Arc: first the knowledge of God, *Dieu premier connu*, replies Descartes. The first and ultimate foundation of all is the infinite will of God, at once mysteriously all-powerful and mysteriously unchangeable: the privilege of God alone. All things flow from this divine freedom, which itself is subject to nothing. For everything that is, depends on divine creation, which is nothing else but the will of God; and that continued act, by which God preserves all things in existence, is the same as the act by which he created them.

Here we touch the bedrock. It is none other than the mysterious contact of creation, in being that is constantly passing away and being replaced, with the Being that is in its very nature infinite, eternal and all-powerful; whose action includes the whole of time; whose vast incomprehensible power is the cause of his own perpetual being, and also the cause which continually, as it were, reproduces the being of all he creates. Here is the basis, and the mutual relationship, of the principle of *the unchangeableness of the divine will* and the principle that *the greater cannot be produced by the less*—the two postulates, or rather the two aspects of that ultimate postulate, on which the whole of Cartesian thought is founded. It amounts again to saying: FROM NOTHING, NOTHING; or, in other words, everything exists, either *through a cause* which contains in itself all being and all perfection, or else *in virtue of itself*, as though through a cause—a superabundance of its own power—which can have no existence but in God himself. And this means that everything, whether outside God or within him, proceeds from the true and real immensity of his power. 'In the whole universe,' Descartes wrote, 'God's is the only unwearying spirit: as careful in numbering the hairs of our head, or in providing for the minutest grubs, as he is in moving the heavens and the stars.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> To Chanut, 26 February, 1649.

Hence flow all the rules of ethics—the highest and most perfect ethics: the branch of knowledge which, presupposing (as Descartes says, in the preface to his *Principles*) a complete knowledge of the other sciences, is the highest degree of wisdom. It detracts nothing from the practical morality that is born of custom, tradition and experience; everything essentially belonging to this, it retains; but it transforms it, by substituting for custom, as a guide to the will, the reason which takes God for its object and final goal. The great business of human life is to make good use, not only of reason, but of freedom. Now, to be free is to obey God, to do God's will. Hence the meaning and necessity of prayer; because—as the philosopher declares in a letter to Elizabeth (and refines upon the point in his discussion with Burman)—this unchangeable God has resolved from all eternity to grant my desire only if I ask it humbly by prayer and a good life; so that, this being so, it is best to rely on Providence and to surrender to its guidance.

That is why, as he writes to Chanut<sup>1</sup> in a passage of wonderfully high spirituality: 'I am not surprised that certain philosophers conclude there is no religion but Christianity; for, by teaching us the mystery of the Incarnation—by which God so abased himself as to become a man like ourselves—it makes us thereby capable of loving him.' Of loving *Him*. There is no greater 'extravagance' than 'to wish to be gods, and so (very mistakenly) to love merely the Divinity instead of loving God. But,' he adds, 'if we keep carefully in mind his infinite power, by which he created all those things of which we are the least part; if we remember the extent of his providence, which makes him see, in a single thought, all there has ever been, all that is, all that will, and can be; if we ponder the infallibility of his decrees which, while detracting nothing from our free will, are yet not subject to any manner of change; and lastly, if we consider our own littleness on the one hand, and on the other the grandeur of the whole creation, observing how it all depends on God . . . meditation on these things fills everyone who understands them properly with so intense a joy that, so far from being guilty of ingratitude towards God by wishing to take God's place, he cannot but feel he has lived long enough, since God has graciously admitted him to the attainment of such knowledge; and, united to him in will, he will love him so perfectly as to desire nothing else in the world but that the will of God be done.'

<sup>1</sup> 1 February, 1647.

Certainly it is a mystery, or 'a marvel of God' (as he calls it in his *Cogitationes Privatae* of 1619),<sup>1</sup> the relation *sui generis* between human freedom and divine omnipotence. But is not mystery at the root of everything? Wherever mystery is present—and it is present everywhere—the mind is incapable of 'understanding'. Yet it can 'know' that it exists: just as it is possible to 'touch' a mountain but not possible to 'embrace' it. But, to touch God in thought, it is first necessary to submit to him, by an act of generous humility. Such an act, for us, is the engendering of all certitude, all wisdom and all happiness. 'M. Morin,' writes Descartes to Mersenne,<sup>2</sup> 'treats everywhere of the infinite as though his mind were superior to it, as though he could understand its properties: it is a fault common to most. I myself have carefully endeavoured to avoid it, never treating of the infinite except in a mood of submission.'

This, more than anything else he wrote, is a revelation of Cartesian spirituality, as it is of all true spirituality. Submission to this mystery, eminently real and eminently incomprehensible, is the source of the unity in Descartes' philosophy, and the source of its vigour and life. And that is why it always continues to inspire—now, more than ever, in a world that has lost all sense of direction.

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To 'inspire': the word is not too strong. I propose to justify it by showing briefly, but with the necessary precision, the benefit to be drawn today from Cartesian spirituality; how it can help us to redress our errors; how, and in what sense, it can nourish our spiritual life and furnish a basis for faith.

In the process of believing, two steps are involved, and the one completes the other: *Intellige ut credas. Crede ut intelligas*. Understand to believe; believe to understand. Ordinarily the human mind is incapable of grasping, at one and the same time, both these complementary aspects of the total truth: it is unable to adopt simultaneously the two opposite attitudes demanded by the search for truth in every order of being. So it is that the two steps involved in the human act of faith, though properly inseparable, are generally presented as separate in fact. But in the greatest Christian thinkers, who never exclude either step, the accent is found sometimes on one, sometimes on the other. Hence the

<sup>1</sup> '*Tria mirabilia fecit Dominus: res ex nihilo, liberum arbitrium, et Hominem Deum.*'

<sup>2</sup> 28 January, 1641.

origin of those two families of the mind whose representatives are found in every age of history: the followers of Aristotle and the followers of Plato, Abélard and St. Bernard, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, Descartes and Pascal. The first see the natural light of reason as the essential characteristic of man; they draw their arguments from the fact that faith depends upon rational premises (God, the moral law, the immortality of the soul): these demand understanding before belief, *in order to believe*. The second believe before ever they understand, *in order to understand*; for, according to them, true understanding presupposes faith; the datum which must be the starting point for the human mind is provided for it, either by supernatural revelation, or (as Malebranche was to declare), by that kind of natural revelation we call experience; such is the fundamental position of St. Augustine, and of all the Augustinians; of St. Anselm of Canterbury, too, who saw quite clearly the double implication of the act of faith, yet begins with faith and passes to reason, returning thence to his starting-point.

The opposition, or (if it is preferred) the distinction, which we note here, explains well enough the distance which separates the spirituality of Descartes from that of Pascal. Descartes and Pascal, as Bergson said, are the two sources from which flow the two great streams of thought, the one giving pre-eminence to the reason, the other to the heart. But there is more to be said than this. Pascal's 'heart' is not just sentiment; it is the fine point of the spirit, it is the intuitive and immediate thought which sees things whole; and the rejection of reason *qua* reason (which Pascal, a mathematician and physicist by temperament, saw as the final step for reason to take) is an act itself eminently reasonable: it consists in knowing, by means of the reason, that there are an infinity of things, natural and supernatural, that transcend the reason; yet, incomprehensible as they are, they none the less exist. The result was that, as the very principle of all thought, Pascal set this act of submission by the reason to that which transcends it: for him, the reason is capable of understanding, only on condition of first submitting. That is the condition of the stake (*le pari*).<sup>1</sup>

With Descartes it is very different—apparently, at least. He is seen as the father of rationalism, and the expression may be allowed provided it is understood in a precise sense; for primarily,

<sup>1</sup> See on this subject my *Pascal* (Plon 1922, new edition 1949), and my edition of the *Pensées sur la vérité de la religion chrétienne* (Boivin).



and in everything—apart from the truths of faith, which (he holds) 'it would be wrong to seek to maintain by merely human and probable arguments'<sup>1</sup>—'this French cavalier', as Péguy calls him, 'setting off at a brisk canter', would accustom himself to believe only the dictates of pure reason, yielding only to the evidence of the true. Not that, thereby, he would fall into the error of those who maintain the existence of two truths, the truth of reason and the truth of faith, even when they are contradictory. 'Firmly believing,' he writes,<sup>2</sup> 'in the infallibility of the Church, and at the same time having no doubt at all of my own reasoning, I can see no danger of one truth's being contradicted by the other.' Yet he dislikes nothing so much as the overlapping of human knowledge and the truths of faith. He distrusts those who would 'too lightly join religion or revealed truth, the knowledge of which depends wholly on grace, which the science acquired by natural reason alone';<sup>3</sup> and those, too, who would draw from Holy Scripture truths that have nothing to do with human knowledge, and use Scripture for an end never intended by God.<sup>4</sup>

All this is true. But a careful study of his work shows that his rationalism is precisely the opposite of what is commonly understood by rationalism today. This latter is not content to place its faith in reason: it has no faith in anything else. It would sacrifice, subordinate, or reduce to the level of reason, every single principle of knowledge and action, and even religion itself. Rejecting all transcendence, it shuts itself up in an order that is exclusively immanent; rejects everything it is incapable of knowing, as if it were irrational in itself, therefore nonexistent and unreal; it measures all, in short, by the human reason, instead of measuring it, as it should—as Descartes did—by the infinite thought and will of its creator, God. In human rationalism, the human reason is sufficient for man, and sufficient for itself. In divine rationalism (if we may call it so) God alone is self-sufficient and God alone suffices: *Solo Dios basta*, said St. Teresa of Avila. The rationalism of Descartes, like that of St. Thomas, like that of all the great Christian thinkers and all true metaphysicians since Plato, is a rationalism of this sort: it could take as its motto the saying of Plato in the fourth book of the *Laws*: 'It is not man, but rather God, who is the measure of all things.'

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<sup>1</sup> To Mersenne, 27 May, 1630.<sup>2</sup> December 1640.<sup>3</sup> August 1638.<sup>4</sup> Jean Laporte brings this out in his fine study on *Le rationalisme de Descartes*.



Precisely there, for us, lies the essential value of the Cartesian spirituality: it is there it can be of such vast help to us now. 'To-day,' as a distinguished French prelate has remarked, 'it is not faith that is lacking, it is the reason that is sick.' Therefore it is the reason, first and foremost, that must be restored; and it must be restored by a broad use of that intellectual discipline of methodic doubt, so as to purge it of all prejudices that hamper sound judgement and clearness of vision. Ever since the Renaissance and the Reformation—twin offspring of that Occamist nominalism which severed the human reason from reality, and therefore from God—and particularly since the eighteenth century, which vulgarized the original error and broadcast it in every form, man (to follow the thought of St. Paul)<sup>1</sup> has been seeking his sufficiency in himself instead of in God; but man cannot find completion in himself, only in God. This forgetting of God and deification of man is the source of all our errors and evils, not intellectual only, and moral, but also social and economic.

For these evils, Descartes supplies the remedy: showing us that man can find his sufficiency only in God—a truth assured by right reasoning. But this does not mean that man must become separated from himself in order to rise to God. On the contrary: he must begin by knowing himself, provided that in doing so he does not become wholly shut up within himself. This is the lesson proclaimed by all the greatest mystics, including St. Teresa herself, who cites St. Augustine:<sup>2</sup> 'It is within ourselves we must seek God. Obviously there is no better method; it is certainly not necessary to climb up to heaven: all we have to do is to enter into ourselves.' By entering deep into the soul we read our immortal destiny there: we find God.

'*Sum, ergo Deus est,*' wrote Descartes in the twelfth of his *Regulae ad directionem ingenii*. I am, therefore God is. Just as in the *Cogito* I seize the necessary link that joins my actual thought with my actual existence, so in the fact of my existence I grasp the essential link, the *conjunctio necessaria* which binds indissolubly my dependent being to the unconditioned Being of God. Or, to join the two propositions, as they are in fact joined, by means of the abridgement already made by St. Augustine: *Si fallor, sum*. Indeed it is precisely this doubt, this *failure of thought*, that I am conscious of, and it is from this doubt that can be inferred both the imperfect existence I know to be mine and also the perfect existence of God.

<sup>1</sup> II Cor. iv, 7.

<sup>2</sup> In chapter 40 of her autobiography.

So it is possible to say he who doubts God affirms his existence, just as St. Anselm could say that the fool denying God merely proclaimed him.

Here Descartes links up with the Augustinians, whom he approaches at so many points. We know the place in his doctrine held by the ontological argument for the existence of God, formulated first by St. Anselm. According to this, the idea of God is no *image*, as Hobbes objected;<sup>1</sup> nor is it a *concept* of our understanding, as Kant was to claim later. The idea of the existence of God is not derived from any image or concept of God, but from the true and unchanging idea of him.<sup>2</sup> This is within us, like the craftsman's signature on his work. And here, in a very positive way, the immensity of God's nature and power is revealed. For 'the idea we have of God teaches us that there exists in him but one single act, wholly simple and wholly pure; and this is expressed very well by St. Augustine, when he says: *quia videt ea, sunt*, for in God *videre* and *velle* are one and the same thing'.<sup>3</sup>

But to understand that, or at least to know it—for 'we cannot understand the grandeur of God, however much we know it, but the very thing we deem incomprehensible is that which makes us esteem it all the higher'<sup>4</sup>—to be capable of receiving from God some reflexion of that 'pure and constant light, that light which is clear, certain and always present', which in a state of glory we shall actually possess—to do this we must accustom ourselves, even in this life, to detach the mind from the things of sense. So Descartes wrote to Mersenne:<sup>5</sup> 'As for my reasons for accepting the existence of God, these, I maintain, are clearer in themselves than any geometrical demonstration: they are obscure, it seems to me, only to those who are unable *abducere mentem a sensibus*.' A great lesson, this: he alone can know God who is liberated from the senses and spiritual pride. None is more topical.

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*Cogito, ergo sum. Sum, ergo Deus est.* We understand now the significance and function of the double and unique formula, the foundation of the whole Cartesian system.

<sup>1</sup> The word 'idea' in English is commonly synonymous with 'image'; it was this that led Berkeley, when reviving the Platonic Idea, to designate it by another term (and a very wrong one), namely 'notion'.

<sup>2</sup> See what I have said in *L'idée et le réel* (Arthaud) concerning the essential difference between 'concept' and 'idea'.

<sup>3</sup> To Père Mesland, 2 May, 1644.

<sup>4</sup> 15 April, 1630.

<sup>5</sup> March 1637.

By its means Descartes makes a clean sweep of the dilapidated idealism of the moderns; this, from Fichte to Husserl, is something imprisoned within man's thought, as if the thought of man were sufficient for itself, as if it were the *ego* that created the world. By the same means, too, he rids us of pantheism. As he remarks profoundly, in his twelfth Rule, the proposition 'I am, therefore God is' cannot be converted into 'God is, therefore I am'. Also—in exact opposition to Spinoza—Descartes saw and proclaimed, with all the clarity one could wish, that the necessary relation between God and man, though binding, is not reciprocal. From man as premise we can draw God as a necessary conclusion, but we cannot draw man as a conclusion from God. God is the necessary Being: he is That which is. Man is a contingent being: he exists only by the grace and by the will of God who created him, of God who preserves him and constantly recreates him; so that all our thought, our life and being, are dependent upon Him—who is dependent upon nothing.

The human mind does not *make* truth, it *receives* it from God; it sees it in the light of God, on condition that it makes the necessary effort to do so, that it *consents* to do so; for there is no seeing without looking. Here again freedom is necessary to knowledge. For man, it is the source of all love and all joy. 'For the nature of love is to bring about the realization of a union with the loved object, in which union the lover is aware he is but a part; clearly it follows from this that our love for God should be without any comparison, the greatest of all things and the most perfect.'<sup>1</sup> And also, as he says at the end of his third Meditation: 'Just as faith teaches us that the sovereign felicity of the other life consists simply in this contemplation of the divine majesty, so we may find, even now, that a like meditation, though incomparably less perfect, gives a greater measure of content than any other experience we can enjoy in this life.'

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So much we have learned from Descartes, confronting him face to face with the modern world. His message is extremely cogent; it relies solely on reason; it is based on very intimate, very direct and very convincing experience.

He has succeeded in establishing, on the firmest foundations of

<sup>1</sup> To Chanut, 1 February, 1647.

philosophy, the principle of! what Bérulle made the *primum movens* of Christian spirituality: 'One must look first to God, not to oneself: work, not in regard to oneself or in search of oneself, but in pure regard for God.' For God is our end: not He for us, but we for Him. So, from God the Father of Lights, we rise to his beloved Son, the Christ, the Light of Lights.<sup>1</sup> 'Father', said Jesus, 'eternal life is knowing thee, who are the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent.'<sup>2</sup>

The outstanding merit of Descartes, a great Christian, as he was a great philosopher and man of science, was to lead men back, by the ways of reason, to their lost knowledge of the one true God. Bérulle, his master in spirituality, remarked of Copernicus: 'A brilliant mind of that century would maintain that the sun, not the earth, is the centre of the world. This novel opinion, which has had little following in the science of astronomy, is not without value and should certainly be followed up in the science of salvation.' For the latter consists wholly in the adoration of God and adherence to the Divine Being: 'Jesus is the true centre of the world, and the world should be in continual movement towards him.'<sup>3</sup>

Descartes effected in philosophy just this 'Copernican revolution', which consists, not (as Kant pretended) in setting human understanding at the centre of the universe, and causing all things else to revolve about that, but simply in seeing God as the centre of all.

It was thus he based the foundation of all true spirituality. And if he has not, like the mystics, traced out for us its various stages and halting-places, at least he has opened wide to us the whole expanse of the field. By setting man in the presence of the infinite, by showing him he can neither exhaust all nature nor be sufficient to himself, he has made him feel once more, in the very depths of his being, the need for some superhuman aid. Such aid, if God in his infinite bounty should grant it, makes it possible for man to transcend his own self and have access to the fountain-head of Reality, before the time comes for him to be united to it in glory.

<sup>1</sup> 'Du bon usage de l'esprit et de la science' (*Œuvres complètes de Bérulle*, ed. Migne, 1856, pp. 1245-1247).

<sup>2</sup> John xvii, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *De l'état et des grandeurs de Jésus. Discours II, En forme d'élévation à Dieu sur le mystère de l'Incarnation* (Ibid., p. 761).

# GUSTAVE THIBON

By STANLEY GODMAN

GUSTAVE THIBON is almost unique even among French writers in that he is not only of peasant origin but is and remains a peasant. At the age of eleven he went to work in his father's fields, in the valley of the Ardèche, and there he is still a farmer. He has never been parted from his roots. Throughout his life he has continued to draw his sap direct from the earth, remaining in continuous harmony with the great rhythms of nature. In his adolescence, however, he was seized with a passion for books and it happened that he was then given the run of a library which a friend had inherited. Without a teacher and without asking for time off from his agricultural work he mastered Latin, Greek, German and mathematics. Those that meet him today report that he is a 'disconcertingly happy man'. 'The secret of being cheerful and pleased with life,' he would say with Pascal, 'is to be at war neither with God nor Nature, not deliberately to seek happiness, but to let yourself be invaded by it and thus embrace the only reality that is capable of curing the evils of this present age.'

As a self-schooled peasant he represents an almost unique synthesis of the concrete, immediate experience of a life immersed in unremitting toil on the land and the speculation of a profound religious and philosophical mind. Two thinkers have influenced him more deeply than any others and the marks of their thought are apparent throughout his work: Pascal and Nietzsche. Gabriel Marcel goes so far as to claim that 'Nietzsche revealed him to himself'. From Nietzsche he certainly learnt that 'horror of the uniforms and old clothes with which we rig ourselves out to represent what in reality we are not'.

In his latest book,<sup>1</sup> in which he reprints one of his earliest essays, a most original study of 'Nietzsche and St. John of the Cross' (1934), he has made his most substantial contribution to the study of this much-maligned and still rarely understood 'Christian

<sup>1</sup> *Nietzsche ou le Déclin de l'Esprit*, Lardanchet, 1948.

without God' (as Thibon calls him in a profoundly useful and significant phrase). He is much like Max Picard and Gabriel Marcel in that all his books are, as it were, fed by the same central source of inspiration so that 'all his themes intersect and tend to merge' (Marcel). It is not important which of his books one reads first. What has been said of Picard, that 'each new work is less the expression of an inner development than a radiation of his presence . . . it is as though the same phenomenon were being illuminated by the same searchlight from different angles', is equally true of Thibon.

The first of his works of social criticism, *Diagnostics*,<sup>1</sup> was published in April 1940 and contains essays written during the years 1934-39. Some references to Nazism were expunged from the editions that appeared during the German occupation but they were restored to the edition of 1945. In the Preface to this later edition Thibon takes the opportunity of replying to some of his critics. He is not, he asserts, an enemy of democracy as such, but only of the 'pseudo-democracy' based on the abstract law of numbers and the caprices of politics and finance, which 'deprives the people of all natural supports and local ties' and leads necessarily to totalitarianism. His criticism of socialism is that it tends to absorb and efface the *communautés de base*, the family, the small business, the self-governing parish and locality, draining away the concrete life from them and making them mere units in an all-powerful State mechanism. 'What we need is a wholesale remoulding of society which will assure to all men, on every rung of the social ladder, a life of healthy independence' (above all, freedom from the tyranny of money). The very foundations of such a society are 'on the point of ruin'. It is futile to argue whether the house should be repainted 'white, green or red' when the foundations of the house are crumbling. It is 'not a question of whitewashing but of reconstructing the house'—from the base upwards, of recreating society 'humbly and patiently', starting with the foundations.

This is Thibon's recurrent theme. 'We have been so excited about raising the world that we forget that, all the time, we must have something firm to stand on. The living foundation is being sacrificed to the technical superstructure and it is ceasing to sup-

<sup>1</sup> *Diagnostics*, *Essai de Physiologie Sociale*, Préface de Gabriel Marcel, Librairie de Médecis. English translation by Willard Hill, *What Ails Mankind: An Essay on Social Physiology*. (Sheed & Ward, New York, 1947.)



port it'.<sup>1</sup> The primary activities of civilization are being neglected in favour of the secondary, unnecessary pursuits. Thus, as Thibon writes in his essay (in *Diagnostics*) on 'Centralization and Anarchy' 'one searches in vain for a shoemaker in the village, but one finds a manicure at every corner of the street in the town'. With this concentration on secondary activities, man is wasting his vital energies, throwing away his reserves, living too much from hand to mouth, becoming 'incapable of waiting', losing a valid relationship to time. Egoism and the squandering of the 'most profound resources of the social body' go hand in hand. Socialism, which knows nothing of the political wisdom that cherishes and creates reserves of strength, sees only obstacles to its own hasty designs in the 'wells of life, the wells of tradition and experience' which give refreshing waters to the body of society. It cannot tolerate the 'elements of stability', the forces of the silent, hidden reserves.

With this draining away of the 'capital of society', the individual increasingly succumbs to the unhealthy stimuli of the artificial towns and cities. These stimuli are not necessarily harmful. But to enjoy them without detriment to the soul 'one must possess a virgin capital of cosmic life'. Thus, as Picard has written, the inhabitants of the East who still have an intact 'substance of silence' in their souls 'are able to endure life with machines better than where it has already been destroyed'. Where man is still in touch with 'these vast reserves of freshness and depth which close communion with nature and familiarity with silence creates in the soul'<sup>2</sup> he is immune from the deleterious influence of the drugs and poisons of urban life. 'To remain human in the midst of the artificiality of urban existence there must be a balance between the expenditure caused by the excitements of the external and the receipts of the interior life.'

In 1941 Marcel de Corte, of the University of Liège, published a small collection of Thibon's aphorisms under the title *Destin de L'Homme*.<sup>3</sup> Thibon had left these with Professor de Corte but knew nothing of the publication at the time as correspondence between Belgium and unoccupied France was impossible. Of the many quotable aphorisms we may select a few which throw particular light on Thibon's major themes. '*La vraie nécessité libre, elle est mystère où l'on s'enfonce et non problème où l'on se brise.*' Thus, as he

<sup>1</sup> V. A. Demant, *What is Happening to Us?* Dacre Press, 1949, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Thibon: '*Vie urbaine et surmenage affectif*' in *Diagnostics*.

<sup>3</sup> Desclée, De Brouwer.

has said in another place, the necessities of peasant life create 'strong, original personalities' whereas the freer life of the towns tends to produce people with no ideas or feelings of their own. 'Social limitations are the precondition of individual fullness.'<sup>1</sup> Of great importance is Thibon's distinction between 'ancient' and 'modern' technics. Whereas 'ancient' technics 'educated' the material world, 'modern' technics tend to 'violate' it. 'The soul of the earth and the seasons—the soul that still sings in the labourer's sickle and the weaver's shuttles—is crumbling today under the foreign grindstone of the machine. The inspired tool serves the life of man, it helps him in his necessities, but the tool without a soul only serves his arbitrary desires and his superfluous appetites.'

In *The Return to Reality* (1943)<sup>2</sup> his primary theme is the need to confirm the threatened realities by which the substance of man's life on earth is nourished. Modern individualism, by separating man from the supra-individual 'ensemble of realities', from soil and locality, from the personal crafts and professions, has weakened and impoverished instead of strengthening and confirming the individual. As a concrete symbol of the threat to the vital substance of real life he takes a French village the population of which has declined from 2500 to 1000 in 50 years and where the annual birth-rate has dropped from 80 to 15. Cultivated fields are gradually being nibbled away, the fallow land increases, the peasantry is being gradually ousted by the new officialdom. 'If the same evolution continues for another sixty years there will be nothing left of the material and moral foundation of society represented by agriculture.' We are now in 'death's ante-chamber' and once death has completely overtaken us there will be no cure.

Agriculture is not only of primary material importance, it is also supremely important as a 'school of truth'. The danger of so-called 'purely spiritual values' is that they so easily lay themselves open to lies and illusions. A philosopher, a teacher or a politician is able to get away with untruths and half-truths which the farmer would never be able to 'put across' for six months, let alone a lifetime. In other domains, the 'sanction of facts' is vague and distant, but here 'the intrinsic value of the worker is inscribed directly in the results of his work'. No deception is possible. Hence the peasant's contempt for 'pure ideas'. 'A politician whose madness and wickedness are only revealed after frightful collective

<sup>1</sup> *Retour au Réel*, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Retour au Réel*: Nouveaux Diagnostics. (Lardanchet, 1943.)

disasters would be eliminated in a year or less as a peasant.' Fraudulent success is out of the question. It is only in contact with the earth that 'thought becomes wisdom', for 'wisdom is the *incarnation* of the idea'.

Wisdom is more easily found in the 'narrow' ways of life and work than amongst the mobile, outwardly freer modes of life and that is why the capital of wisdom is declining in the restless, ever-moving, ever-changing world of today. Take the small peasant-proprietor working the plot of land bequeathed him by his forebears, whose whole destiny is bound up with this one corner of earth. 'If he fails in his duty, he is immediately punished' and he knows this soil so well that he would find it almost impossible to transplant himself and begin again elsewhere. Such a break in the continuity of his life would spell disaster. Compare with his life the incoherent, discontinuous life of a highly-placed government official, 'tossed about from one place to another by the eddies of an uprooted existence'. Instead of being intimately bound up with his work and milieu, it hardly matters where he is or what he turns his hand to. Instead of his work being as the body is to the soul, it is rather what clothing is to the body, no longer an organic extension of himself, a useful, necessary protection, but replaceable, detachable, purely utilitarian, belonging more to the realm of 'Having' than to that of 'Being'. What one has is what one can exchange for something else, and what one can lose—also what one fears losing. 'It becomes, or is in danger of becoming, the centre of a kind of whirlpool of fears and anxieties.'<sup>1</sup> With the peasant, on the other hand, the 'duality of possessor and possessed—of person and work—is lost in a living reality'.<sup>2</sup>

It is fruitful to pursue Thibon's analysis of the realms of 'having' and 'being' in conjunction with Marcel's discussion of the same theme. Thibon takes the examples of the peasant and the government official, Marcel<sup>3</sup> the two modes of relatedness to a place. One man lives in a place for a time but gets bored with it as soon as he has 'exhausted' its sights. He feels as if the place is a prison, he longs to get out of it. Another man lives in the same place for years, but never tires of it because he 'participates in its life at the point where it is inexhaustible', a living relationship has been created between himself and the place, a creative exchange,

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Marcel, 'Outlines of a Phenomenology of Having', *Being and Having*, p. 162, Dacre Press, 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Marcel, *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Du Refus à L'Invocation*, p. 97.

whereas the other man came only to enrich himself, to enrich his *avoir*, he was merely interested in the place, not involved in it, he was a mere collector of information about the place, he had no roots in it.

There are the same two modes of relatedness between persons. I can treat other persons 'as an ore from which I extract all the useable metal and regard the rest as mere waste'. I can value the other person as a useful subject for conversation, as a collector's piece for my museum, to whom I give nothing, surrender nothing, except what is necessary in order to extract what I want (the technique of the 'interviewer'!) In such a relationship there is no creative exchange, no true communication, no 'openness to the other', no 'putting of one's life at the disposal of the other', no self-forgetfulness. But the latter is the kind of relationship which exists between the peasant and the earth he owns and tills—a relationship of love and mutual self-giving. If a man's roots are not in his work 'you cannot expect him to devote himself to it wholeheartedly'. 'Man only devotes himself to what is part of himself, to the things and beings without which he cannot live—he does not take so much care of his hat as he does of his head.' And for many people today, their work in life is more in the nature of a hat, keeping out the cold and wet, than a part of their own body, or at least an 'organic extension' of that body. There is a kind of 'symbiosis' between man and the land which makes the peasant's work almost as 'spontaneous as a natural function'. He cares for the land as if it were in fact a 'living being' in need of and dependent on his help and care. Compare with such love and cherishing of the earth the irresponsibility and lovelessness in the relationship of the anonymous worker in a great factory or a great office to his work. More often than not he feels like a cog in a huge machine which would work just as well without him. That is the descent from the realm of 'Being' to the fear-ridden realm of 'Having'.

Thibon declares that his whole social philosophy and policy can be summed up in the idea of a society in which all men not only 'have a place' but 'are in their own place', in the place which they alone can fill. The realm of 'Being' is the realm of the religious, the realm of 'Having' that of the secular. Thus, agriculture is more a religious than a secular activity. 'It cannot be Americanized.' The supra-human forces of weather and the soil cannot be predicted or controlled. The attitude of the peasant is more akin to pure religion than to the applied sciences. 'Pure

religion constitutes a realm where the subject is confronted with something over which he can obtain no hold at all. No gesture is more significant than the joined hands of the believer—whether the gesture is one of dedication or of worship, we can still say that behind it is the realization of the Holy.<sup>1</sup> The peasant must be prepared for all his toil to have been in vain, he cannot expect an immediate, automatic reward for his work, a safe pay-packet at the end of every week. But it is the 'unique fullness' of the agricultural life that it realizes the difficult balance between the two poles of human duty—the initiative of the free person and the acceptance of necessity. It is difficult for a peasant to share the modern proletarian's belief in the omnipotence of man, yet it is he who subsists in the midst of the worst social cataclysms when those whose only help is in man are swept away. 'He leaves nothing to chance but confides everything to destiny.'

Thibon has none of the romantic's illusions about the 'moral superiority' of the peasant. What superiority he has is biological and social. We need the vigour, the patience, the continuity, the eternal youthfulness and adaptability of the peasant. We need him as the 'guardian of our genius and our freedom'.

Separated from the 'tutelary bases of existence' man is also becoming increasingly incapable of 'authentic engagement', of personal commitment. There is an increasing readiness to 'leave it to others', 'leave it to the State', 'leave it to the police'. Men of an earlier age preferred to tackle the job themselves, even if it meant, as it certainly did in one amusing example Thibon relates with some relish, taking the law into their own hands. An old man he knew when he was a boy had been slandered by one of 'those viperous tongues of which every village has a good supply'. So he waited for her to come out of church on Sunday morning and, to the great joy of the public, gave her a sound thrashing with his own hands. Thibon does not necessarily approve of the morality of the action, but he points to it as an example of healthy vigour, of an 'active engagement of the person' in 'full daylight', of strength of purpose, which is certainly far to be preferred to the 'creeping rancour of the anonymous letter'.

The prodigious shrinking of the world as the result of technical progress has also led to the increasing depersonalization of thought and feeling. The radio fills us with opinions and feelings about realities often far beyond our own normal intellectual and emo-

<sup>1</sup> Marcel, *Being and Having*, p. 190.



tional sphere, with ideas that do not 'engage', do not bind us, ideas lacking motive power and the possibility of incarnation. 'Leave the things you do not understand and cannot alter and concentrate on the immediate things committed to you and to no one else—your family, your work and your social milieu.'

In an important discussion of the deleterious influence of modern individualism and uprooting on the birth-rate (*Individualisme et Dénatalité*), Thibon analyses the reasons why the young girls of today find the life of their ancestors so monotonous and narrow. A 'varnish of pseudo-culture' received at school, the cinema, ease of travel, the contemporary myths of liberalism and materialism are tearing them 'from the great cosmic and social continuities' in which even as recently as fifty years ago life was embedded in the countryside. 'Man has been reduced to himself.' When a young girl dreams today it is of other things than the smile of a little child. It is more likely to be of the 'glamorous' unrealities of the film-world than of the immediate, elemental realities of peasant and family life. It is inevitable that in this 'flight from reality' the thought of 'the most brutally and indiscreetly natural reality of all—the child' should be suppressed. 'One can cheat with the other necessities of life but a pregnancy cannot be other than absolutely natural.' Therefore the tendency is to avoid it.

In the essay which has apparently aroused most controversy and is indeed open to misinterpretation (and, in the present writer's view, legitimate criticism) Thibon discusses 'Christianity and the Mystique of Democracy'.<sup>1</sup> He questions the validity of the universal suffrage, arguing that 'political wisdom' is the result of long study and even longer experience and that the ordinary man has neither time nor opportunity to acquire it. It is 'like medicine or philosophy', 'accessible only to a small number of men'. It is a 'branch of knowledge' and like all other branches of knowledge best left to the expert. Are politics merely one of the 'branches of knowledge'? Certainly there is a 'science of government' but we are not asking the 'man in the street' to be a permanent civil servant or even a Member of Parliament. We are surely not appealing to him as a political expert at all, though of course a democracy can only be a pseudo-democracy unless there is a high level of political 'consciousness', but this is not necessarily identical with political 'knowledge'. Thibon is certainly open to serious

<sup>1</sup> *Retour au Réel*, pp. 77-116.



questioning here. He says:<sup>1</sup> 'My neighbour, a peasant full of common sense, would be seriously offended if he was asked his opinion about the advantages of pneumothorax in the treatment of advanced tuberculosis, but he finds it quite natural to be consulted on the opportuneness of a Soviet alliance or the control of the currency. How is it possible, Thibon asks, that such an absurdity should not have been laughed out of court long ago? He answers (rather too obviously under the influence of an overdose of Nietzsche?) that it is the 'inevitable consequence of the political degeneration of the religious sentiment'. All men are a priori *capax dei*, but since the State has 'reabsorbed God' all must now be invited to the political banquet.

This is not the place to discuss the question<sup>2</sup> in any detail but there is surely a connexion between the implications of such a conception of 'political wisdom' (leave it to the expert) and the trend to totalitarianism. In a society in which everyone has some say, however remote and however uninformed, perhaps even misinformed, in the running of affairs, it seems that there will be less danger of a one-party and ultimately a one-man State. Certainly a healthy society will be concerned primarily with local government and only secondarily with national affairs, or rather there will be a broadly-based political pyramid but there must always be contact and interaction between all levels of the pyramid and that means that the 'ordinary' man must certainly be brought into periodical consultation. Certainly, we are all, or should be, as Thibon continually stresses, experts in some branch of life and knowledge, with roots in some particular locality, members of a specific family, but, unless the clock is to be turned back to the pre-industrial, the 'pre-educational' age, and, as far as the present writer has discovered, Thibon has nowhere suggested in so many words that that is in fact feasible, then we have to reckon with a world in which much of our knowledge is inevitably second-hand.

Thibon would deny the validity of any second-hand knowledge, but in that case, why did he himself take up the non-peasant activities of reading and writing with such enthusiasm? Why did he not remain illiterate, relying wholly on the immediate, first-hand experience of his daily toil as a peasant? Once a man embarks on the 'educational' pursuit of reading and writing he thereby accepts, albeit unconsciously, the validity of second-hand knowledge. Certainly it is less reliable, less vivid than immediate

<sup>1</sup> *Retour au Réel*, p. 89.

empirical knowledge but we have to face the problems and difficulties which it involves (and there is certainly no doubt that ultimately most of the intricacies of the human situation are traceable to its increasing predominance).

It will simply not do to say 'leave politics to the expert'. Thibon is absolutely justified in condemning an excess of faith in the power of political action, in the substitute-religion which is what so much contemporary politics really is. To believe that the human condition can be radically improved merely by altering external conditions, a 'remedy which demands no effort from the individual', is certainly 'a monstrous parody of Christianity', if it has any connexion with Christianity at all. On the other hand, to sing the praises of personal charity as opposed to the depersonalized philanthropy of the State is all very well but it seems that public 'charity' has come to stay and we have to work towards a more personal order of society from within this system and to condemn it out of hand is not going to alter it.

In this connexion, however, it needs to be added that Thibon himself has initiated some remarkable industrial experiments (especially in certain Belgian factories) in which attempts are being made to recreate a personal relationship between the firm and the employees and the employees and the job, in other words to transfer to the small factory some of the qualities which make the small family farm one of the most healthy and 'symbiotic' of working units. Here too his gospel is, as always, 'Start from the foundations and work upwards.' Earth is the foundation, the beginning of heaven. 'In the name of heaven, let us save the earth.'

In earlier ages it was a Christian duty to wean men from their natural instincts, today it is more urgent to encourage them to cultivate and strengthen them. St. John of the Cross attacked the inordinate desire to have children, today he would be more likely to be attacking the desire not to have children. The very foundations of human life are no longer taken for granted. 'The living foundation is being sacrificed to the technical superstructure.' Formerly the Christian had to struggle *against* nature, today he must fight *for* nature, 'to save the minimum of bodily health necessary for the grafting of the supernatural'. 'Nature is like a tower from the summit of which man soars upwards towards heaven—today the foundations of the tower are tottering.' 'To neglect the earth in the name of heaven is to turn heaven into a mere phantom.' 'Human nature is not a prison from which it is

necessary to escape in order to enter into God . . . it is rather a dwelling which must be purified for God to enter in.'

The time is approaching when it will demand heroic efforts to live a 'normal' life. If life is to continue, heroism must become a necessity, no longer a luxury. It will need heroism to accept the humbleness and obscurity of the 'normal', that is, the 'humanly necessary' life. As Christopher Hollis has put it,<sup>1</sup> the exceptional and the abnormal in the old societies has become the rule and the 'normal' in the new societies. It is now exceptional to be 'normal' and it requires courage and heroism to be an exception in a standardized society, to be natural in the midst of artificiality.

In *Le Pain de Chaque Jour*, a collection of aphorisms published in 1945,<sup>2</sup> Thibon has written a series of variations on the fundamental themes of his earlier books. It is the 'word of life', the basic necessities of life that he proclaims once again. 'The saints have been able to live on a single sentence from the Gospels whereas today we run from one idea to another because we assimilate nothing.' The radio is the supreme instrument of dissociation and distraction. 'Many people hang on the radio today, avid for all the news, receptive to all ideas . . . this is called "openness of mind" . . . I do not envy this quality . . . it is a sign of health and unity in the interior life that there should be wide zones of indifference . . . this modern "receptiveness" implies a dangerous passivity.' Readers of Mr. Grisewood's *Broadcasting and Society* will recall his warning that 'the whirling of all sorts of opinions and influences through the listener's mind may end by destroying all his faculties of acceptance and rejection . . . is this the way to keep a Christian society? Is this the way to regain the Christian virtues?'<sup>3</sup> 'The radio,' Max Picard has said, 'presupposes that man is interiorly incapable of perceiving continuity, that is, of seeing things as they are in their relation one with another, each according to its own nature.'

In a later aphorism Thibon notes that the less real and concrete things are, the more they are worshipped today. Even natural and necessary things are stripped of their substance and true reality. Woman is idolized not in her function as wife and mother but as an instrument of sterile pleasure, reduced from an authentic person to a tool, from a 'subject' to an 'object'. The same

<sup>1</sup> 'The Love of Death,' *Horizon*, September 1948.

<sup>2</sup> Editions du Rocher, Monaco, 1945.

<sup>3</sup> Harman Grisewood, *Broadcasting and Society*, S.C.M. Press, p. 48.

process recurs in the wholesale reduction of 'incarnate' truths to 'abstract' truths. 'Is our mind a *screen* on to which ideas are projected, or a *door* through which they penetrate to the foundations of our being?' Are ideas a mere 'spectacle' or a 'food'? Are they an unnecessary, superfluous luxury or our 'daily bread'?—'*Le pain de chaque jour*'?

In what is perhaps his profoundest, certainly most coherent work so far, *Ce que Dieu a uni*,<sup>1</sup> published in 1947, he makes the prophetic announcement that something has begun to occur in the life of the spirit that has never occurred before. He discerns:

a broadening of the ways of the Lord, a descent of the sacred into the spiritual, of the eternal into the temporal, of the spirit into life, unprecedented in history. On the one hand, grace tends more and more to impregnate and to exalt the natural and vital values; on the other, affective and even mystical Christianity is spreading progressively in the laity among those with temporal vocations. Things of the earth and things of the flesh, at last recognized and adopted by the spirit, no longer have to hide in the dark or come forward in disguise. Passions and instincts may be displayed in their biological purity and in full communion with spiritual love. The whole man is restored to God.

An exceptional mode of living, a complete renunciation of the exercise of certain natural faculties are becoming progressively less necessary to profound contact with God. St. Thérèse de Lisieux may mark the transition from one kind of holiness to the other. 'It seems that a new unity is trying to establish itself through the ruins of the modern spirit.' We may well be passing through one of the 'historical nights' in and through which 'new ages of the spirit' are evolved. We may be the witnesses of the 'humanizing and universalizing of holiness', of a holiness that is 'more welcoming to nature and the senses', of a rediscovery of that oneness 'with God and with nature' which Pascal described as the 'secret of a happy and contented life'. For the present age is the culmination of the atomization of man and society. Either man returns to the natural foundations of life or he dies, and 'for death there is no cure'.

Man is essentially an 'animal at war with himself' and, unlike all other beings, superior and inferior, he does not receive his humanity all at once, he has to achieve interior unity by a long and painful process of choice and effort. 'All other things are what they

<sup>1</sup> *Ce que Dieu a uni*: Essai sur l'Amour, Lardanchet, 1947.

are—man *becomes* what he is.' Conflict is at the very heart of his destiny. In every minute of life man has to fight himself, in the most trivial and everyday things (such as forcing himself to get up in the morning or to resist the 'invitation of the April sunshine to go for a walk the day we should be working') as in the highest, supreme decisions of life. Human life is marked above all by a conflict between spiritual values and vital energies. Either 'the spirit goes on ahead and life follows on as best it can or gets left behind altogether' or, which is far worse, 'spiritual values are falsified by repressed vital energies'. The false mystics and practitioners of the spiritual life are those whose mediocrity would be broken to pieces in the ordinary pursuits of life and their fraudulent 'successes' have occasioned the modern legion of 'debunkers' of the 'lies of the spirit', of whom Nietzsche was the pioneer. Those, on the other hand, and the modern world has its share of them too, who have made a choice for 'life' against the 'spirit', have forgotten that man is no more destined to 'play at being an animal' than to 'play at being an angel'. 'We are men', men in whom life cannot be separated from spirit without mutual corruption, poisoning and perversion. 'Spirit and life are made to be united and yet distinct.' 'What God has joined let no man rend asunder.'

The interior schism in man derives from his separation from God. It is only when man is alone with himself that he is at war with himself. Cut off from his source, he can no more be expected to attain interior harmony than the plant deprived of light can enjoy its vegetal harmony. Man's separation from God does not, however, suppress his need for God, or at least the thirst to commune with some 'nourishing necessity'. Hence isolation gives birth to idolatry, to the worship of *homo sexualis*, *homo politicus*, *homo ethnicus*, *homo oeconomicus*, each at war with the rest of man, each a substitute for God. There is no doubt that profound internal discord has often been the 'predisposition' to Christianity (in St. Augustine, Pascal, Baudelaire for example), the conflict which is resolved in harmony, which is the precondition of new harmony. The victory of Love is that it reconciles man to God from whom he has been divorced, and reconciles man to himself, since God is also his deepest self (*interior intimo meo*—Augustine).

The Christian war of love is a 'war against war', the 'war of liberation of the Other against the self', in which life is given to the spirit and life itself is spiritualized, in which the distinct but convergent ways of authentic spirit and authentic life are made plain.



God is Spirit, but God is also Love, the perfect unity of Life and Spirit. The Love of Christ is an incarnate love, 'a descent of the eternal into the temporal', the supreme pattern of 'bio-spiritual interpenetration'. Much that has passed for asceticism in the past has been a caricature of the spiritual life.

Thibon tells an amusing story (which may seem like a sudden descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, but it is worth passing on) about a little girl, now an old lady, who on her first day at school called out to the nun who was taking the class, 'Sister, I have a pain in my stomach'—probably what she said was actually nearer the 'belly-ache'!—to which the teacher replied in horror, 'My child, you have just spoken in an immodest fashion. You must say "I have a pain under my apron!"' The time is past for such squeamishness about the physical side of life. 'The human problem is not to *choose* between the senses and the spirit, but between the *domination* of the senses and the *domination* of the spirit.' The affectivities have to be spiritualized ('sublimated') in and through suffering, through the narrow way of the Cross: 'sublimated', but not repressed, not annulled.

In his discussion of the more practical questions of 'Love and Marriage' Thibon first analyses the question of the choice of a partner. It is much healthier, he argues, to marry within one's social and geographical milieu than outside it. A marriage between peasants from the same region is more likely to be happy than one between 'a peasant and a Parisian shorthand-typist'. If such a marriage is successful then it is exceptional, for the individual qualities demanded by such a match are more than can be expected from the average man or woman. In 'classical' periods the institutions of the common life 'surpassed and sustained' the individuals who represented them. The monarchy was more than the king, the priesthood more than the priest. But today the position is reversed. The institution is being sacrificed to the individual. Whereas in former times the 'immense reserves of strength and continuity' of the institution itself gave strength and continuity to each individual marriage, today each individual marriage is thrown back on its own immediate resources. Hence the tragic failure of so many marriages. The organic supports of the institution have collapsed. A 'vulgar thirst for superficial happiness' is no basis for a lifelong partnership. One supremely important precondition of a happy marriage is the ability of the partners to be true friends. Nietzsche advised a man intending to marry to



consider 'whether you will be able to talk with this woman all the days of your life'. Friendship corrects the inherent tension in the sexual dualism, it appeases the sexual conflict. A life shared with a wife who is also a friend 'saves the limited unilateral life of each partner from itself'. Friendship alone can open the one to the other. There is a difference, however, between friendship between a man and wife and friendship between two men. 'It can rarely attain that perfect intellectual transparency that is the unique charm of male friendships.' Love that unites the sexes lives from the 'reciprocal mystery', is based partly on the ultimate impossibility of complete mutual understanding. 'Friendship grows as we penetrate into the soul of the friend, whereas Love decreases as we strip the woman of her mystery.'

It is the paradox of love between the sexes that it must unite the 'material and divine extremities of man'. It is a 'synthesis of the real and the ideal', impossible to such a degree in any other sphere of life. It is only in marriage that the union of the highest love and the most earthly material necessities of life is perfectly accomplished. 'It is the symbol,' as Picard said in his book on Marriage, 'of the encounter of the Higher and the Lower, of the sacred and the profane, the Whole that is more than the parts, the unanalysable, indestructible basic human phenomenon.'

Thibon has a remarkable passage on the relationship between Love and Silence. 'Words may differ: it is enough that our silences should be in harmony.' 'There is no real understanding between persons except in so far as understanding precedes speech. Words spoken have no value unless they proceed from the silence and the words received unless they leave a trace of silence in the soul and add something to its silent treasure. . . . Friendship is born of words, Love of silence. Two new lovers find it just as difficult to speak as two new friends to keep silence.' We cannot forbear to add to this some words from Max Picard on 'Love and Silence' in confirmation and enlargement:

Lovers are the conspirators of silence. When a man speaks to his beloved, she listens more to the silence than to the spoken words. 'Be silent,' she seems to whisper. 'Be silent that I may hear thee!' All the mystery of lovers comes from the nearness of the mysterious origins of love. The closer they live to this original mystery the firmer and the more enduring will be their love.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Die Welt des Schweigens*, p. 94.

On 'Love and Death' Thibon writes: 'Those who are in love are in a sense already dead. They are withdrawn, like the dead, from the realm of chance and falsity.'

In his most recent work, *Nietzsche ou le Déclin de l'Esprit* (1948),<sup>1</sup> which includes the important essay on 'Nietzsche and St. John of the Cross,' first published in *Etudes Carmélitaines* in 1934, perhaps the most valuable contribution to a juster understanding of Nietzsche is the pregnant phrase in which he calls him 'a Christian without God'. The book marks a new stage in Nietzsche studies, already heralded by Fr. Copleston's study published in 1942 and by a more recent and specialized study of 'Nietzsche and Christianity' by Karl Jaspers.<sup>2</sup> What all these recent students of Nietzsche are concerned with is to re-interpret him in the light of his own assertion: 'We have outgrown Christianity not because we have lived too far away from it but because we have lived too near it, even more because we have grown out of it; it is our stricter, more fastidious piety which prohibits us from remaining Christians today' (1886).

It is true, as Thibon says, that 'in the tumult he has stirred up since his death Nietzsche has remained as unknown as he was in the silence which greeted him in his own life time'. He himself realized that his work would be plundered and reduced to a system based on a few misunderstood and misappropriated slogans. But the real world of Nietzsche is 'a virgin forest in which the tiniest blade of grass is often as important as the highest tree'. Only long meditation on the whole corpus of his thought can prepare the way for that 'slow and prudent integration of his thought into the Christian synthesis' to which Thibon's study is a major contribution. 'Perhaps only those can share his solitude and become his friends who worship the God he sought to replace by man.'

Nietzsche's tragedy was that he 'thirsted for God in his soul but denied God in his mind'. He was a 'pilgrim of the absolute' who turned his back on God. But having killed God in man, he used up all his strength to 'extract a God from man'. The heir of a long Christian tradition and the son of generations of pastors, Nietzsche applied the strictest scruples of Christian morality to an attack on the Christian 'reality' of his own time. He was, as Pro-

<sup>1</sup> Lardanchet, 1948.

<sup>2</sup> *Nietzsche und das Christentum*, Hameln, 1948, first delivered in lecture form in 1938.

fessor Jaspers has said, 'hostile to Christianity as a reality because he was bound to Christianity as a challenge'. 'We anti-metaphysicians of today,' he said, 'still take our fire from the blaze that a thousand-years-old faith has kindled.' His demand is that Christianity should be not abolished but 'overcome' by a super-Christianity.

The basic flaw in his attack on 'Christian reality' is of course that what he attacks is merely a caricature of Christianity. 'Even as a boy he never experienced the objective truths of Christianity as a reality' (Jaspers). He never had an inkling of the depths of Christian theology, he never bothered about the sublime structures of Christian thinking (it was the ultra-feministic poetism of the small cathedral town of Naumburg that was really what he had in mind and confused with 'Christian reality' throughout his life). This was his tragedy, as Thibon says, that he was like a psychologist analysing the different manifestations of masculine sexuality and refusing to recognize the existence of the feminine pole of attraction, who would see in woman only a phantom issuing from man's dreams. But he is 'a unique master in the art of recognizing and bringing to light *everything in Christianity which is not Christian*', that is, in Christianity as a historical and psychological phenomenon. Thus he has contributed and still has the power to contribute to the purification of the true faith. 'We can agree with him when he lays bare the defects of those souls who imagine they are good Christians, but we cannot agree with him when he sees in these defects the very essence of Christianity.' In other words, he identified mid-nineteenth-century Naumburg with Christendom, an immediate and highly fallible reality with the totality of Christian thought and life.

In reacting against the narrowly Pietistic Christianity which he grew up in he proclaimed certain values—'gratitude to the earth and life'—which we can assimilate into a Christian synthesis. His cult of the earth and the body was onesided and perverted but we can incorporate it into that necessary revival of natural, earthly values of which Christianity and the world today stand in such need. His praise for the *schenkende Tugend* (self-giving virtue) of the genius stands close to the self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice of the Christian ideal. 'I love him,' Nietzsche said, 'whose soul overflows to the point where he forgets himself.' It is this 'fullness in which all the frontiers between the self and the other are effaced', in which the supra-individual values of life are

exalted, which brings the Nietzschean closest to the Christian ideal. Both are directed against the self-conserving, self-satisfied utilitarianism with which even the so-called 'Christianity' of Nietzsche's age was often so closely allied. Nietzsche's 'crime' is that he attributes to the 'superman' all the characteristics which Christian theology attributes to God, including even the infinite mercy which impelled Christ to die on the Cross.

In his reaction against a 'deliquescent humanitarianism' Nietzsche often tends to idealize violence and hardness but Thibon reminds us that in a little-known but very remarkable passage he adopted an attitude to the problems of peace and war which is almost identical with that of Christian pacifism.

The so-called armed peace [he wrote] is the expression of a bellicose disposition which trusts neither itself nor its neighbour and refuses to lay down arms partly from hatred and partly from fear. But—better to perish than to hate and fear; and thrice better to perish than to make oneself hated and feared. The tree of military glory can only be destroyed at one swoop, with one swoop of lightning and since lightning comes only from above one can but hope that some day a nation renowned in war and victories will deliberately proclaim: 'Let us break our swords and demolish our entire military organization, lock, stock and barrel.'

Incidentally, these views of Nietzsche were expounded by Professor A. Wolf in a series of lectures in the University of London in 1915<sup>1</sup> when the fashion was to make Nietzsche responsible for German militarism and the war<sup>2</sup> just as his name has been linked with the rise of Nazism.

The weakness in Nietzsche's case for unilateral disarmament, Thibon argues, is that the strength thus to 'imitate God' can only be derived from God Himself. Only the utterly God-filled man, not the 'superman puffed up with a false divinity', can be capable of such supremely self-forgetful risks, and that applies even more to a whole nation than to the single individual. Nietzsche rediscovers the redemptive power of suffering but 'he rejects the God who gives it a meaning and an end'. One step more and he would have come nearer perhaps than any other great non-Christian thinker to the inmost truths of Christianity.

In his brilliant comparison of 'Nietzsche and St. John of the

<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, by A. Wolf, London, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Nietzsche and Treitschke: The Worship of Power in Modern Germany*, by Ernest Barker, Oxford Pamphlets, 1914.

Cross' Thibon works out the highly remarkable parallels between this 'most extreme' of all the saints and this great modern 'Christian without God'.<sup>1</sup> 'I love him whose soul is too full: I love those who have no wish to preserve themselves' (Nietzsche). 'A generous heart never stops if it can go still further' (St. John of the Cross). Both were thirsty for a supra-human plenitude, both felt the need for the surpassing and the loss of self. 'If Nietzsche had spoken in the name of a transcendent reality perhaps he would have been the Hercules desired by God to carry out some vast cleansing of the modern spirit . . . he would then have purified and not destroyed.' Such a mission would have demanded an acknowledgement of the unconditional primacy of the object. But Nietzsche's extreme subjectivism could never have tolerated the sovereignty of the non-self.

St. John of the Cross lived from God. Nietzsche lived from himself. In St. John the subject is lost and resurrected in the object, in Nietzsche the object is totally absorbed by the subject. St. John strips man of his masks and dross to clothe him with all that *is*, but the reward for Nietzsche's purification of the self is the nothingness of death. St. John's thirst for the absolute is positive, Nietzsche's negative. Suffering is not an end in itself with St. John, but a way, through death to life, the end is love, whereas with Nietzsche the end is death, the ultimate abyss of separation from God. Yet, perhaps, on the threshold of the night of total mental darkness, in the last days of 1888, when he was wandering around Turin, a star of Christian light may have shined for a moment in the sky of his self-intoxicated, self-consuming mind. Nietzsche saw a coachman tormenting a horse a few steps in front of him. He threw himself, in a flood of tears, round the animal's neck and in that very moment—perhaps the very first in which he had ever really escaped from himself—his conscious life capsized. 'Did he open his soul,' Thibon asks, 'faced with this poor suffering flesh, to the supreme appeal of the Crucified?'

'Nietzsche revealed him to himself,' Marcel has said of Thibon. Thibon the Christian realist, who sees a return to the living foundations of man and society as the supreme need of our time and the supreme need for Christianity, is attracted above all by Nietzsche the non-Christian, the near-Christian realist, the affirmer of the goodness of the earth and the body and by Nietzsche

<sup>1</sup> Cf. F. C. Copleston on Nietzsche and St. John of the Cross in *Friedrich Nietzsche, Philosopher of Culture*, Burns Oates, 1942, p. 89.

the unmasker of all moral and intellectual unrealities and sophisms. 'The more his writings are read,' J. N. Figgis wrote in 1917,<sup>1</sup> 'the more difficult will it be for Christians to go on trying to serve both God and Mammon. They cannot go on for ever halting between two opinions, directing their lives by one standard and professing lip-service to another. . . . We shall do well if we take from his bitter tonic its goodness, its sense of the greatness of things, the need of courage and a free soul, the futility of mere comfort-worship, the worth of discipline.' The Nietzsche whom Thibon seeks to embody in a Christian synthesis is the Nietzsche who 'seeks to inculcate veneration for the deep-lying sources of life, to take us down to the bed-rock of life, the rock whence we are hewn.'<sup>2</sup>

Much of what Thibon has said so persuasively about the need for a 'return to reality', to the prime realities of agriculture and the necessary and fundamental human pursuits, is of course in harmony with much that is being said with increasing vigour and urgency in our own country. Mr. Jorian Jenks is not the least of those who are calling us back to the living foundations, to the primary realities so neglected and despised by modern industrial civilization.<sup>3</sup> Cobbett would have welcomed him as a kindred spirit, as an eloquent champion of the land as the basis of civilization (all the more incisive as he himself practises what he preaches). He is a Christian realist who sees in Christ Himself the supremely balanced Realist, the perfect accord between action and passivity, the material and the spiritual, in whom there was nothing other-worldly in the conventional sense, whose very language was 'based on the poetry, the utility, the intimacy of man's seasonal commerce with the earth' (H. J. Massingham). Only through reborn individuals, in whom there is vital balance, can there come a new social and international order. Since we cannot have harmony on the surface unless the fundamentals are sound, vital balance depends not only on our consciousness of an outer and an inner world, but on recognition that these worlds are interpenetrating at every point.

<sup>1</sup> *The Will to Freedom* (Bross Lectures, 1915.) (Longmans Green, 1917, p. 309.)

<sup>2</sup> Havelock Ellis, 'Nietzsche' (in *Affirmations*, 1899).

<sup>3</sup> Jorian Jenks, *From the Ground Up* (Hollis and Carter, 1949.)



# SOME REFLECTIONS ON LOGICAL POSITIVISM

By FREDERICK COPLESTON, S.J.

ONE does not need to know very much about the history of philosophy in order to realize that philosophy does not develop in complete isolation from other elements of human culture. Plato's philosophy was clearly influenced by the general cultural situation in which he was born and brought up. It was also influenced by Plato's interest in mathematics, the only science which had attained any remarkable degree of development in the Greek world. The direction of Aristotle's thought was influenced by his biological investigations. The political theory of both Plato and Aristotle has to be viewed in close connexion with the concrete political life of contemporary Greece. Mediaeval philosophy cannot be understood in complete isolation from theology: indeed, Christian theology provided the mental background and atmosphere in which philosophers philosophized. One can legitimately say that it was theology which, to a large extent, set the problems for the philosopher and acted as a fertilizing principle.

In the modern era, however, that is to say, in the period after the Renaissance, the background of philosophy has been provided, to an increasing extent, by the empirical sciences, which have developed to such an astonishing extent since the pioneer work of the great Renaissance scientists. Indeed, a remote preparation for the later conception of the world can be seen as early as the fourteenth century. When philosophers like John Buridan and Albert of Saxony discarded the Aristotelian theory of motion and adopted the *impetus* theory of Philoponus, they were preparing the way for a conception of the world as a system of bodies in motion, in which impetus or energy is transmitted from one body to another, the total amount of energy remaining constant. The origin of motion or energy was ascribed to God; but once the machine had been started, to speak crudely, it proceeded mechan-

ically. As the heavenly bodies, for example, do not encounter resistance, the original impetus given them by God at creation is sufficient to account for their movement; and it is unnecessary to postulate any Intelligences of the spheres. The principle of economy can be applied to the Intelligences postulated by Aristotle. In this way consideration of the problem of motion in the fourteenth century paved the way for a new cosmology, like that represented by the philosophy of Descartes in one of its aspects. It is unnecessary, for the general purpose of this article, to show how the development of the various sciences in the modern era has influenced philosophy: it is sufficient to remind oneself of the influence of mathematics and dynamics on the Cartesian philosophy, of the influence of the growth of historical science on Hegelianism, of the influence of biology, in a wide sense, on Bergson, of the influence of sociology and the rise of economics on Marxism, and of the influence of the newer physics on a philosopher like Whitehead. At the same time one should bear in mind the influence of the general historical and social situation on philosophers and their thought. The political theories of Hobbes and Locke, for example, and later that of Hegel, have to be interpreted in connexion with the historical situation in which those philosophers severally found themselves. The German romantic movement was reflected in German idealism after Kant. Modern existentialism is not without its roots in the cultural milieu and general spiritual atmosphere, though one has to remember that the influence of the spiritual atmosphere in which a philosopher finds himself is not always 'positive': in many cases it produces a strong reaction. But to produce a reaction is, of course, to exercise an influence.

It is not the purpose of the foregoing remarks to encourage a purely relativistic interpretation of philosophy and its development. One should not allow the possibility of incurring a charge of 'relativism' to blind one to the facts of history; but, apart from that, it is obvious, I think, that the fact of a given philosopher having been influenced in his adoption of some particular theory by non-philosophical factors does not mean that we cannot raise the question whether that theory is true or false or partly true and partly false. But my real reason for making these general remarks concerning the development of philosophy was to show that if one tries to give a partial explanation of the present vogue of the logical positivist outlook in England and certain other countries in terms of factors which lie outside philosophy itself, one is not

attempting to treat logical positivism in a way that one is not prepared to treat other philosophies. On the other hand, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander; and if, in the case of other philosophies, one can discern the influence of non-philosophical factors, it is only to be expected that one should be able to do the same in regard to logical positivism. There is no reason at all for supposing that the latter is a privileged exception. Nor is this sort of treatment necessarily a belittlement of philosophy. After all, it would be extremely surprising if the various elements of human culture were without influence on one another. And, if one admits the influence of non-philosophical factors on philosophy, this does not mean that one denies the influence of philosophy on other elements of human culture. It is not a case of one-way traffic only.

I have spoken of the amazing growth and development of the empirical sciences in the modern era. This rise of empirical science is, indeed, one of the major features of the post-Renaissance world. At the same time, if anyone compares the development of empirical science and the development of speculative philosophy in the modern period, it may easily seem to him that, whereas the development of the former is an advance, that of the latter is nothing of the kind. It is very easy, and perhaps natural, to draw some such conclusion as the following. Scientific theories and hypotheses change indeed; but, by and large, there is advance in empirical knowledge; and hypotheses which have been recognized by later scientists to possess only a limited validity, or even to be incorrect, have nevertheless often proved fruitful as providing the stepping-off ground for a more inclusive or a more accurate hypothesis. In some cases speculative philosophers have suggested hypotheses or theories which have later been empirically verified, in some form at least;<sup>1</sup> but in such cases the truth of the hypothesis has been established, not by philosophic speculation, which often resembles brilliant guesswork, but by the empirical methods of scientists who have been able to verify the hypothesis, immediately or mediately. The advance in knowledge has thus been due to science rather than to speculative philosophy. And, when one comes to look at the theories of speculative philosophers that are not empirically verifiable, one finds a succession of highly personal interpretations of the universe of being, the truth or falsity of which cannot be established. They may have a certain

<sup>1</sup> For example, the heliocentric, as opposed to the geocentric, hypothesis.

value, for they express certain poetical or emotional reactions to the world and may provide for their authors and for like-minded individuals a scheme for the synthesis of their emotional life. And, as the emotions are a powerful factor in life, metaphysical systems, which express and co-ordinate emotional reactions, may also exercise a practical influence. But this does not mean that they represent 'knowledge'. If we seek factual knowledge, we must go to science. The reason why metaphysical systems constantly reappear is that man is something more than a cold and dispassionate observer; but, even if metaphysical speculation is as inevitable as lyric poetry, that does not mean that either gives us knowledge about the world.

Another factor which has to be taken into account if we want to understand how the logical positivist mentality has arisen, or perhaps rather how a mental climate favourable to logical positivism has arisen, is the tremendous growth of applied science in recent times and its influence in making possible our industrialized and technocratic civilization. I am talking now of the 'masses' who live in highly industrialized and materially developed societies. These people are very conscious of the great benefits which have been brought to them and to society in general by applied science. They understand little of the nature of scientific hypotheses or of the provisional character of many scientific concepts; but they see clearly the practical benefits of applied science and they become accustomed to look to science for anything which makes 'a difference' to life. Philosophic theories and speculations about the world seem to them, so far as they ever think of such theories, to be little more than a harmless pastime; they make 'no difference' and they produce no tangible results. If one wants tangible results, one must go to the scientists; and it is tangible results which are the criterion of real knowledge about the world. The ordinary man does not think of questioning the assertions of the scientists, since the latter have proved their worth; but it would not occur to him to accept without question the assertions of theologians or philosophers. How can they know the truth of what they say? The only proof of the truth of their assertions would be a scientific proof; and no such proof has been forthcoming.

What I am suggesting is that the immense growth of empirical science and the great and tangible benefits brought to civilization by applied science have given to science that degree of prestige

which it enjoys, a prestige which far outweighs that of philosophy, and still more that of theology; and that this prestige of science, by creating the impression that all that can be known can be known by means of science, has created an atmosphere or mental climate which is reflected in logical positivism. Once philosophy was regarded as the 'handmaid of theology': now it has tended to become the 'handmaid of science'. As all that can be known can be known by means of science, what more reasonable than that the philosopher should devote himself to an analysis of the meaning of certain terms used by scientists and to an inquiry into the pre-suppositions of scientific method? The philosopher will not increase human knowledge in the sense of extending our factual knowledge of reality; but he will perform the humbler, though useful, task of clarifying the meaning of terms and showing what they denote in terms of immediate experience. Instead of serving the theologian, the philosopher will serve the scientist, for science has displaced theology in public esteem. As science does not come across God in its investigations; and, indeed, as it cannot come across God, since God is, *ex hypothesi*, incapable of being an object of investigation by the methods of science; the philosopher also will not take God into account. Whatever can be known can be known by means of science. As to human survival after death, the philosopher will be willing to admit this precisely in so far as the statement that something of man survives can be verified empirically, by, for example, a critical and scientific investigation of the data of spiritualism and psychic research.

Before I proceed any further, I had better make it quite clear that I am not suggesting that all philosophers who adhere more or less to the logical positivist position are materialists, in the sense that they all lack belief in any spiritual reality. For there are logical positivists who are believing Christians. These would, however, lay emphasis on belief: they would say, I think, that they 'believe' though they do not 'know' that there is, for example, a God. I am rather doubtful myself if a logical positivist can consistently be a theist at the same time; but it appears to be an empirical fact that there are people who are both, whether consistently or inconsistently. One is not entitled to say, then, that 'logical positivist' and 'materialist' are identical. Nevertheless, even those logical positivists who are believing theists or Christians are influenced by the common persuasion that it is science alone which can provide us with factual knowledge. In any case the



existence of logical positivists who are prepared to make an act of faith in realities, the existence of which they do not think can be verified, does not alter the fact, or what appears to me to be a fact, that the soil out of which has grown the mentality favourable to logical positivism was prepared by that development of the empirical sciences which is characteristic of the modern era. Needless to add, to say this is not to say anything against the empirical sciences. Indeed, one of the problems of modern culture is that of combining technical industrialized civilization with religious faith, artistic sensibility, and perception of moral values: it is only cranks who wish to destroy machines and return to the woods. But the fact remains that the growth of the empirical sciences has helped to produce a mental outlook which is unfavourable to metaphysics and to religion. How many people there are, as we know by experience, whose practically spontaneous attitude towards theology and metaphysics is that of believing that they are dreams and moonshine. In the last century people used to talk about a conflict between religion and science. We see now that there is not, and cannot be, any conflict between religion and science in the sense in which that conflict was understood in the last century; for no verified scientific statement can contradict a revealed dogma. We are no longer troubled by apparent discrepancies between scientific theories and *Genesis*; for we have a better idea now of the nature of scientific theories and hypotheses on the one hand, while on the other hand every sensible person realizes that the Bible was not designed to be a handbook of astronomy or of any other branch of science. But it is none the less true that the growth of our industrialized, technical civilization, governed predominantly by economic values, has produced a type of mind which is 'naturally' closed to the Transcendent, to metaphysics and to theology. In my opinion, it is the existence of this type of mind, or of this mentality, which is largely responsible for the influence of positivist philosophy in such countries as England, Sweden and the United States. Positivism is, in large part, a reflection of that mentality. On the other hand it helps to intensify and strengthen that mentality. In regard to logical positivists who are theists or Christians one may remark that it is always possible to rise above one's philosophy, just as it is possible to sink below one's philosophy or one's religious creed.

I do not, however, wish to give the impression that, in my opinion, logical positivism can be dismissed as being simply the



ideological reflection of a certain type of mentality fostered by what some people like to call 'bourgeois civilization'. There is more in logical positivism than that. Earlier on in this article I remarked that if one tries to discern the connexions between philosophies and factors which are not purely philosophical, and if one tries to indicate the influence of the latter on the former, that does not mean that one is unable to raise the question of the truth or falsity of the philosophies concerned. And it is quite obvious that men of acute intellect, possessed of a real power of philosophic thought, would not adhere to a philosophic movement or method unless they considered that there were good philosophic reasons for doing so. It would be quite illegitimate to suggest that all logical positivists were frivolous individuals playing a mere game or delighting in scandalizing the theologians, metaphysicians and moralists. It is important, then, to ask how it is that gifted philosophers can subscribe to a philosophy which might well appear to render practically all philosophy, at least in the traditional sense, superfluous. After all, even if the spirit of 'bourgeois civilization' is favourable to the growth of positivism, it is possible for philosophers to free themselves from the influence of that spirit; and it must be supposed that if a considerable number of philosophers associate to a greater or less degree with logical positivism the reason why they do so is not simply that they succumb, in a quasi-mechanical fashion, to the spirit of their milieu. They must at any rate rationalize in some way their surrender to that spirit; and if we find among those who belong more or less to the ranks of the logical positivists some who are by no means hostile, or even indifferent, to spiritual realities, it is only commonsense to conclude that they do not accept logical positivism without what seem to them to be good reasons for doing so. I want, then, to indicate how, in my opinion, it comes about that serious philosophers can subscribe to a philosophy which rules out a great part of what has been traditionally included in philosophy.

The usual way of presenting logical positivism is first of all to make a distinction between analytic propositions and empirical or synthetic propositions. The former are said to be certain, but not informative, in the sense that they do not give information about the world or existent things. For example, if I say, 'If  $p$  entails  $q$  and  $q$  entails  $r$ ,  $p$  entails  $r$ ', I am simply illustrating, by the help of symbols or variables, the meaning of logical implication. Similarly, if I say, 'Given a Euclidean triangle, the sum of its three angles is

equal to 180 degrees', I am not stating that any thing which could properly be called a Euclidean triangle actually exists; nor is it necessary, in order that my statement should be true, that any Euclidean triangle should exist. I am simply stating what is necessarily implied in the notion or definition of a Euclidean triangle. Indeed, all systems of formal logic and all systems of pure mathematics consist, so to speak, in the unfolding of the implications of certain definitions and premisses. The pure mathematician does not state anything about the existent world: if we want to know what system of geometry, for example, 'fits reality' or is useful for a specified purpose in science, we have to turn to the mathematical physicist or astronomer, i.e. to the applied mathematician. All the propositions of formal logic and pure mathematics are thus said to be 'analytic' and purely 'formal'. They are sometimes said to be 'tautologies', in the sense that they simply state the formal implications of certain definitions and premisses.

I do not propose to discuss this view of logic and mathematics; but I should like to point out two things in connexion with it. First, it is a very common view and is not confined to logical positivists. To say that formal logic is 'formal' is a tautology; and to say that all pure mathematics are formal and give no information about existent things is to say something which seems to me perfectly reasonable. This view would certainly be confirmed if Bertrand Russell's view of the relation of mathematics to logic were correct. Secondly, the fact that the logical positivists accept the view that the propositions of formal logic and pure mathematics are analytic and certain means that one has to make a reservation if one wishes to speak of logical positivism, as 'sheer empiricism'. J. S. Mill tried to show that mathematical propositions are inductive generalizations from experience and that they are not certain; but the logical positivists very properly reject Mill's view in favour of Hume's, though they do not express their view in precisely those terms which were used by Hume.

However, if one leaves on one side their view of formal logic and pure mathematics, one can say that the logical positivists maintain a 'radical empiricism'. In my opinion, this empiricism is at once the strength and the weakness of logical positivism. Empiricism is always in a strong position, since it is only reasonable to accept the position of Locke, that all our normally acquired knowledge of existent reality is based in some way on sense-perception and introspection. Locke did not, of course, rule out meta-

physics: indeed, in his own mild way he was a metaphysician. But he insisted, in a certain famous passage of the *Essay*, that 'all those sublime thoughts which tower above the clouds, and reach as high as heaven itself, take their rise and footing here', in, that is to say, the impressions of sense and reflection on our mental operations. I do not say that the empiricism of Locke is an adequate account of human knowledge; but I certainly think that it is a *prima facie* reasonable view. What Locke did not realize, however, and what later empiricists did realize, was that the principles of empiricism could be turned against the metaphysics which Locke accepted. The strength and appeal of logical positivism is due, in large part, to the fact that it seems to take empiricism seriously; and empiricism, though by no means comprising the whole of the British philosophical tradition, is certainly congenial to the British mentality.

If one accepts empiricism, it would seem that one is compelled to ask, in regard to any existential statement, what it means in terms of the data of experience. For example, if the idea of 'cause' is formed in dependence on experience, or, to put it another way, if the term 'causality' denotes a relation which is given in experience, the question arises what it is that we experience which gives rise to the notion of causality or what 'causality' means in terms of the data of experience. Does reflective analysis show that we speak of a causal relation between two phenomena when we have observed one phenomenon regularly following another phenomenon in such a way that the appearance of the latter enables us to predict, with a greater or less degree of probability, the appearance of the latter? If so, then 'causality' is a term which denotes a relation between phenomena, a relation of regular sequence enabling us to predict. But, if this is what causality means, if, that is, it means a relation between phenomena, it does not mean a relation between all phenomena and something which is not a phenomenon. It may be that we naturally tend to extend the use of the principle of causality and apply it outside the sphere of the relation of one phenomenon to another; but this use cannot be theoretically justified, if the causal relation means precisely a relation between phenomena. This phenomenalist analysis of causality makes hay, of course, of a considerable part of classical metaphysics. If we try to use the principle of causality to transcend phenomena, we are, if the foregoing analysis were correct, simply misusing language. I do not myself think that the metaphysician,

when he speaks of 'cause' means the same thing as the positivist: in fact, when they discuss the notion of causality, I think that they are often arguing at cross purposes; but, if one minimizes the activity of the mind and the reflective work of the intellect, and if, pressing the principles of empiricism, one tends to interpret the meaning of our ideas in terms of 'sense-data', the phenomenalist analysis of causality will appear eminently reasonable. What is more, this analysis gains support from the fact that scientists, for many purposes at least, can get along quite well on the basis of such a view of causality. If a physicist speaks of infra-atomic indeterminacy, what he means is that we are unable to predict the behaviour of electrons in certain connexions. If, then, all he means by causality is regular sequence, enabling us to predict, he is entitled to say that the principle of causality does not 'apply' in this connexion, provided that he has good reason for thinking that the unpredictability in question is one 'of principle', whatever that may mean. This would not, in my opinion, in any way affect the metaphysical principle of causality, which, as such, has to do with existence rather than behaviour; but my point is that the claim of the phenomenalist analysis of causality to be a fully adequate analysis may easily appear to gain support from empirical science. And, in this sense, it may appear that empirical science lends support to the ruling out of metaphysics of the classical type. A further point is that the relation of finite to infinite being cannot be of exactly the same type as the relation of dependence of one phenomenon on another: the former is, *ex hypothesi*, unique. To raise the question of the use of terms, or the problem of language, in this connexion, as the logical positivists do, is thus a legitimate procedure.

But the difficulty concerning language or the use of terms, and the connexion of this difficulty with the principles of empiricism, can be more easily seen, I think, in regard to such a metaphysical statement as 'God loves us'. What love is or means is known through experience. The question therefore arises what 'love', in the statement that God loves us, means. Does it mean that God has certain feelings in our regard, of the type that we feel when we love someone? Obviously not; for God cannot have 'feelings'; and it would be sheer anthropomorphism to think of God as developing certain feelings when man came into existence. Does it mean that God wishes us well? If so, a similar difficulty occurs. The term 'wishing' denotes something experienced, primarily our

own wishing, and also, as interpreted by analogy, the wishing of other people. Do we mean to ascribe wishing to God in precisely this sense? The answer can only be that we do not. In what sense, then? If all that we have experienced in this connexion is human wishing, and if the term 'wishing' means human wishing (and what else can it mean, if we have experienced no other wishing?) the use of the term 'wish' in regard to God involves us either in anthropomorphism or in the use of a term without any meaning. But a term without any meaning is a meaningless term; and the statement that God wishes us well will therefore be destitute of meaning. The fact that it seems to have a meaning may well be due to the fact that, uttered in appropriate circumstances, it has the function of expressing and arousing a certain emotional reaction. If a nurse tells a child that if it does some act God 'will be angry', it need not be supposed that the nurse means to say that God is capable of what we call 'anger': what she wants to do, it might be said, is to work on the child's emotions in such a way that it will not act in the way disapproved of. Thus the statements made in a sermon, for example, may have 'emotional significance', even though they are in another sense 'meaningless', in the sense, that is, that they cannot be interpreted in terms of the data of experience.

Needless to say, the view of metaphysical statements outlined or illustrated above is not my own view: my purpose was not that of giving my own opinions but of showing that a plausible case can be made out for the view that metaphysical statements are 'meaningless'. Further, what I have said shows, I think, that the problem of language is not simply an unnecessary complication of philosophical issues: it is a real problem. For a brief treatment of the question of the use of analogical language in metaphysics, with particular reference to theistic metaphysics, I may perhaps refer the reader to my paper on *The Possibility of Metaphysics*, in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* for the current year. I have there distinguished what I call 'subjective meaning' from what I call 'objective meaning'. In the case of a statement like 'God is intelligent' the theistic metaphysician cannot give the 'objective meaning', in the sense that he cannot tell us what the divine intelligence is in itself. He cannot do this because he has never experienced or intuited the divine intelligence as it is in itself. By 'subjective meaning' I understand the meaning in the mind of the speaker, the meaning that he can state. (Thus I do not use the



word 'subjective' here as equivalent to 'subjective' or without objective reference. It is important to realize this fact.) The subjective meaning of statements regarding existent realities which transcend normal direct experience is necessarily analogical. Now, analogical language, as used in metaphysics, necessarily has a certain imprecision: in the terminology of Ockham, metaphysical statements about God always 'connote' something in creatures. It is one of the tasks of the theistic metaphysicians so to purify the 'subjective' meaning of his statements (for example, by the use of the 'way of negation') that he approximates as nearly as possible to the adequate 'objective' meaning of those statements. But he will not be able to attain an adequate understanding of the objective meaning, not because there is no adequate objective meaning, but because of his psycho-physical make-up and the lack of the Beatific Vision. We have to use 'human language', because we have no other; and human language is not properly fitted to deal adequately with what lies outside the sphere of our normal experience; we have to use human language 'analogically'; and the question is whether such analogical language is to be admitted as significant. It seems to me that the logical positivists interpret 'meaning' univocally; and I see no adequate reason for doing so. But I willingly admit that the problem of 'the meaning of meaning' is a real problem, and that it is not simply the instance of tiresome word-play that it has sometimes been represented as being.

When it comes to ethical statements, however, I must confess that I find it difficult to see how a really plausible case can be made out for saying that such statements are 'meaningless', or, more accurately that they have only emotional significance. It has been argued that ethical statements cannot be meaningless, since we can argue, and do argue, concerning the rightness and wrongness of actions. To this the answer has been made that all we argue about is a matter of fact, not a valuation. We can discuss, for example, whether a particular line of conduct is likely to produce these or those results; but to discuss this question is not to discuss a properly ethical question, unless perhaps we are prepared to say that 'right' means simply productive of certain consequences. But even then, if two people differ in their estimation of what are good or bad consequences, argument between them is possible only if they are already agreed concerning certain wider valuations. If two men are agreed that all consequences of type *t* are bad, then it is possible for them to discuss the question whether a given set



of consequences exemplify type *t* or not. But this is a question of classifying empirical events, not of arguing about values. Ultimately the two men will either differ on a matter of fact or they will differ on a question of valuation in such a way that neither can prove to the other that his view is wrong. If John says that it is murder if a doctor gives a lethal overdose of a drug to a patient suffering from an incurable cancer, while James says that it is not murder but rather an act of charity, argument is possible if they can agree on a definition of murder. For all that remains then is to see whether the definition covers euthanasia or not. But if they differ in their definitions of murder, further argument is scarcely possible. John can try to 'persuade' James, by working on his emotions, or James may have recourse to abuse of John, calling him, for example, 'hard-hearted'; but working on someone's emotions or abusing him is not 'argument', even if argument often tends to such degeneration. That ethical arguments not infrequently do degenerate into abuse or rhetoric simply confirms the view that values are, to use Hume's language, more properly felt than judged. This may sound plausible; and perhaps it is to a certain extent; but it is pretty obvious, I think, that in any sort of argument there must be some common ground between the disputants, if the argument is to be fruitful. The necessity for a common ground is not peculiar to ethics. It appears to me, whether rightly or wrongly, that the real reason why logical positivists say that ethical statements are 'literally non-significant' and that they possess only emotive significance is that ethical statements cannot be 'verified'. We cannot indicate 'what would be the case' if they were true, or we cannot derive observation-statements from them, which are empirically verifiable. But to say this is to say little more than that ethical statements are not statements of empirical science. Who supposes that they are? Again we are faced with the underlying assumption that all that can be known can be known by means of science.

I do not wish to pursue any further the complicated question of the meaning of ethical statements, for, in order to do so with profit, one would have to take into account a variety of ethical systems; and that cannot be done in the present article. But I should like to draw attention to the loose use of the word 'emotional' or 'emotive' by some logical positivists. If one properly speaks of feeling a pleasure and feeling a pain, then it would seem that to speak of 'feeling' moral values is to use the word 'feeling'

analogically. Why not speak of 'perceiving' moral values? If an exclamation like 'Oh!' uttered when I run a pin into myself, is an emotional utterance, a statement like 'I ought to be more kind to X' is an emotional utterance in an analogical sense, in so far, that is to say, as it is proper to call it an emotional utterance at all. If we could speak properly of 'feeling' values, we should have to admit, I think, that the 'feeling' in question is a special kind of feeling; and it would be desirable to allow for this difference in what we say about ethical statements. To lump together as having 'emotional significance' all statements which claim to be informative and which at the same time are not 'empirically verifiable' indicates either a very cavalier attitude or an insufficient practice of analysis. In passing, one might also observe that it is somewhat strange to find a number of philosophers delivering excellent maxims concerning the value of the individual, the value of freedom, etc., when their phenomenalist analysis of the self or their behaviouristic description of man would seem to lead to the conclusion that there is neither a self to have a value nor a human freedom to be prized.

I have mentioned 'empirical verification'. As is well enough known, the logical positivists declare that 'empirical verifiability' is the criterion of the meaningfulness of statements which purport to give information about existent reality. The question immediately arises how 'empirical verifiability' is to be understood. Let us suppose that I make the statement that God exists. I am then challenged to show that the statement is empirically verifiable, by deriving from it an observation-statement, that is, some statement which is empirically verifiable, at least in principle. Let us suppose that I answer, 'If God exists, there will be order in the world.' We can then see if there is in fact order in the world. It is to be noted that I am not suggesting that the statement that God exists implies logically the statement that there is order in the world. The reason why I derive the statement that there is order in the world from the statement that God exists is that, as far as philosophic knowledge of God is concerned, I come to knowledge of God through reflexion on some aspect of or factor in empirical reality. Supposing, then, that my philosophic reason for accepting God's existence is reflexion on the order in the world, I can offer the statement that there is an order in the world as an empirically verifiable statement, which is derivable (not logically, but in view of the empirical origin of our ideas concerning reality) from the

statement that God exists. It is open, of course, to an opponent to say that one cannot justifiably conclude to God's existence from the order in the world; but we are not now discussing the truth of the statement that God exists so much as the meaningfulness of the statement. And if the logical positivist would accept this sort of interpretation of empirical verification, there would not be much reason for quarrelling with his criterion. If it were not for reflexion on empirical reality I should never come, as far as philosophic thought is concerned, to postulate the existence of any being transcending direct experience; and, if anyone wishes to start with the statement of the existence of such a being and challenges me to 'derive' an observation-statement, I can always offer him one of the propositions concerning empirical reality which originally led me to postulate the existence of the being in question. Indeed, the logical positivist would be quite right in demanding the production of an observation-statement or an empirically verifiable statement. And he would be right because human philosophic knowledge of the meta-phenomenal must be acquired by reflexion on the phenomenal, and cannot be acquired in another way.

However, with the more rigorous type of logical positivist one is unlikely to enjoy any such plain sailing. Some would say, I think, that if I make the statement, 'If God exists, there is order in the world', then all I mean by saying that God exists is that there is order in the world. That is to say, the meaning of the original metaphysical statement is identical with the meaning of the observation-statement or observation-statements derived from it. Frankly, this seems to be simply false. To state that a being exists which is responsible for order is not the same as stating that the order exists. Another way of tackling the metaphysician is to ask him what 'difference' his metaphysical statements make. For example, if the metaphysician states that absolute being exists, he may be challenged to say what difference it makes to the world whether an absolute exists or not. The world remains the same in either case. Now, I think that one can detect in this attitude the influence of empirical science of which I have already spoken. It is assumed that the function of a scientific hypothesis, for example, is to predict future possible experience. The conclusion is then drawn that metaphysical statements, to be significant, must fulfil a like function. Here we are faced again with the influence of the *Zeitgeist*, of which logical positivism is, in part, a reflexion. In the face of this attitude the metaphysician could, I suppose, attempt

to meet the demands of the positivist. More probably he would protest that his statement that absolute being exists was not meant to predict anything but to explain something, namely the existence of finite beings. His opponent will, of course, ask him what he means by explanation, and will challenge the validity of the metaphysician's 'principles' or intuition, as the case may be. But at this point we move into a sphere of discussion which does not involve logical positivism as such. The challenge to the validity of metaphysical 'inference' is not peculiar to logical positivism; and a discussion of this challenge would carry one much too far afield.

In conclusion, I should like to repeat what I have said before, that the strength of logical positivism lies in its empiricism. Owing to psychological and epistemological facts, the problem, for example, of the meaning of metaphysical language is a real problem; and it is just as well that it should be brought to the forefront. On the other hand, it is, I think, a great weakness in logical positivism of the more rigorous type that it is so closely associated with the influence of a certain mental attitude characteristic of our industrialized and technocratic civilization. In our own country it is extremely difficult to escape the influence of this mental climate; and I cannot help thinking that this is, in part, the reason why many of us who would not subscribe to logical positivism feel none the less a certain sympathy for it. But, if human culture is not to descend into an arid wilderness of materialism, it is important to remember that there are other levels of experience and knowledge than that represented by empirical science. Moreover, the problems which are of the greatest ultimate importance for man are among those which are stigmatized by the logical positivists as pseudo-problems; and this is a fact which does not encourage one to suppose that logical positivism is an adequate philosophy. Happily, there have always been, and doubtless there always will be, people who concern themselves with these problems. A culture from which such problems had been banished would scarcely be a human culture.

# THE POWER AND LIMITS OF SCIENCE

By F. SHERWOOD TAYLOR

THE ever accelerating growth of natural science distinguishes the last hundred and fifty years from all the time that went before it, and there is scarcely any important movement in recent times to which science has not been at least an important contributor. It has found its uses in almost every human activity. It has made us aware of the vastness of the universe and the minute organization of the atom: it has shown us much of the workings that underly the phenomena of life: it has revolutionized transport and industry: it has increased our expectation of life by at least one-third. Furthermore the method of science—collection of data, their mathematical analysis and verification by experiment—has become the standard method of investigation in every field in which it can be applied. These enormous successes have for many years been prompting men to ask how much more will be done by science, which has already done so much. Are we to hope that science, which has discovered the order of things and has thus enabled us to order them to our ends, will enable us to order our most disordered societies and individual minds? Will science extend itself into the realm of morality? Will science take the place of philosophy? Are we to be content to use its method and dismiss the questions of the philosophers as pseudo-problems?

The discussion of these matters is the more important because they are not merely academic. The shining successes of science have made the public believe in it more firmly than do the scientists themselves: moreover, the forces of Communism have adopted it as the road to their promised millennium. For this reason Dr. E. F. Caldin's book *The Power and Limits of Science*<sup>1</sup> is welcome and timely.

Dr. Caldin's primary inquiry is into the kind of knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Chapman & Hall (1949), 12s. 6d.



that can be attained by natural science, having regard to the character of its data and logical methods. This is most readily to be seen in the realm of physics and chemistry, which is on the way to be reducible to physics, and this is the author's first field of discussion. In physics, measurement, the counting of units, is the fundamental operation, and the examination of comparatively few measurements concerned with a particular class of phenomena leads to the discovery of equations connecting them; these equations are called 'laws' and are taken to apply to all phenomena of that class. These laws are not indeed simply summaries of what have been already observed, but are constructions from the data and going far beyond them. Why can we generalize from a few observations to all observations of the same class? Where is the logical justification for this process? The reviewer would remark that most scientists have not troubled themselves about the matter, and would justify their methods empirically: the scientific method has been found to lead to predictions that are fulfilled, *ergo* it is a method to be used. This will not satisfy the philosopher, who wishes to know why the scientific method works, so that, for one thing, he may know whether it will work in all circumstances. The characteristic method of science is induction—observation, and generalization from observations leading to their interpretation in the form of a law. It is true that in the more advanced realms of sciences, deduction of new laws from laws already known, followed by experimental verification, is the normal procedure, but the fundamental laws from which the whole fabric of science arises are inductive. The general process by which induction tells us that *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* have the property *p*, therefore *X*, which is known to resemble *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* in a limited number of respects and is not known to differ therefrom, has also the property *p*, depends on the assumption, 'that the variety of independently occurring characteristics is limited', which is an assumption of the existence of some degree of order in nature. Without such a presupposition, the inductive method cannot be more than empirical—a way of arguing that has been found to work. What is the source of the belief in order in nature? It appears to be a metaphysical presupposition. At this point the task of critical philosophy, the analysis of the presuppositions of induction, has been completed, and only a constructive metaphysic can give us grounds for believing those presuppositions to be true. An argument from the existence of the first cause may be



suggested, but it has yet to be worked out explicitly by philosophers. Dr. Caldin's account of induction is unusual in thus linking the problem with metaphysics and suggests a new and important task for Catholic philosophers. His treatment is out of the ordinary in that, although like all modern treatments it draws on the work of Keynes and Mill, it rejects the possibility of expressing the likelihood of propositions in quantitative terms and consequently denies the applicability thereto of the mathematical theory of chance. (Mr. Kneale in his recent *Probability and Induction* gives a full exposition of the case for denying the relevance of the mathematical theory to induction.)

What reliance are we then to place on the assertions of science? Their criterion of their reliability is the correspondence of the assertion with reality—or expressed negatively, the apparent absence of any experience with which they certainly conflict. It is evident therefore that the propositions of science are of very varying degrees of reliability. Some are confirmed by very many true predictions, interlocking as it were with our fabric of experience at very many points, while others may be confirmed by only two or three instances and therefore remain relatively uncertain.

Thus science is based on experience and verified in experience; on the variety and quantity of that experience the likelihood of its propositions must depend. It is true that the late Sir Arthur Eddington apparently showed that numerical constants of physics can be derived not from experiment but simply by considering the way in which physical observations are made, but Dr. Caldin follows Sir Edmund Whittaker in supposing that the concepts used by Eddington are in part based on physical theories derived from observation, and that his conclusions do in fact rest upon observation.

We thus reached the belief that scientific propositions are validly arrived at, and that their certainty varies according to the extent to which they are found to correspond with reality.

The discussion has thus brought us to a point at which we shall no longer ask such a question as recently formed the title of a book—*Is Evolution Proved?* No scientific conclusion is proved in the philosophical or mathematical sense. The atomic theory of matter is supported by a vast mass of correspondences with observed fact, and to the reviewer's knowledge, presents few, if any, hiatuses and anomalies: we, therefore, are nearly as certain about it as we are of the approximate sphericity of the earth. The theory of Evo-

lution is supported by a mass of evidence, considerable but by no means as impressive as that which supports the atomic theory: moreover, it postulates much that is not supported by experimental evidence. Considered as a scientific theory it has therefore a lower degree of likelihood than has the atomic theory of matter. But this is not the sole or principal cause of the controversies concerning it, for to many it seems to conflict with religious or metaphysical notions; are these to be taken into account in assessing the probability of the theory? It is evident, then, that we should decide whether other methods than the scientific are able to arrive at truth.

The book under discussion keeps to the philosophical field and does not argue the question of the validity of the certitude attained by faith, but it gives a chapter to metaphysical investigation in which the problem of causality is taken as an example of method. Reflection on experience is taken to be the fundamental method of metaphysics; by it we formulate an account of the fundamental conditions of change, existence, and the rest: this account is subject, like all other conclusions of reason, to the test of experience. It is an analysis and synthesis based on the material of the whole of life and leading to deductions which may apply to any part of our human experience. Metaphysics like science is based on experience and is concerned with the facts of nature. Each in its own way essays an explanation of facts, an interpretation, and each uses experience to test its statements. Yet it is evident that they are different in kind.

The point of view of metaphysics is more fundamental; it cuts deeper and seeks to reveal the ultimate conditions for the existence of anything. The outlook of science, is, so to say, horizontal; its explanations are concerned with the relation of natural phenomena to each other, not to man (who can control them), nor to the first cause (who initiated and upholds them); its explanations are concerned with bringing a phenomenon under a law, or a law under a theory. The outlook of metaphysics, however, is also vertical; it can survey the relations of beings at various levels to each other; its explanations are concerned with identifying the causes of things. It does not explain the behaviour of things by stating the laws of that behaviour, but inquires into the causes both of the thing and of the laws. (This is why it could fill in the gap, the presupposition that the theory of induction brought to light.)

This account of metaphysics may well go far to dispel the dense mist which seems to rise before the eyes of the scientist when the

word is mentioned: the author will not merit Byron's gibe at Coleridge:

. . . Explaining Metaphysics to the nation—  
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

Science and metaphysics are then the natural ways of approach to truth, but what of goodness and beauty?

Is Science beautiful? There is indeed a beauty in science, a kind of harmony, a variety-in-unity, an admirable relation and interlocking of phenomena. The more complete and integrated the theoretical account, the more diverse the phenomena related by it, the greater will be the beauty of science as an autonomous whole. But the beauty of science is not the same as the beauty of that which science describes. The beauty of the physiology of woman is far different from the beauty of woman: the former is appraised by the intellect, the latter is rooted in the relation of woman to humanity, in her character and function as virgin, beloved, wife and mother. . . . Science alone will not give us the relationships that are integrated in the perception of natural beauty.

Is science good, or can it contribute to the good life? Yes, for it makes a man wise concerning the aspects of nature that it studies, and so contributes towards the making of a man wise in the absolute sense. Furthermore, the practice of science is a rational discipline deploying the full forces of keen intellects. It demands at once alertness and caution, it requires the daring of speculation and the honesty that submits that speculation to the ruthless test of experience. It is active: to rest for a moment is to be left behind. A good scientist must always be in some degree admirable, but it must not be forgotten that his good qualities need not follow him beyond the laboratory. Nothing but science itself can shape the course of science. It cannot be framed in anything but truth, for in so far as it is good science, it is true. This the Marxists will find and doubtless they will soon have reason to abandon the absurdities of heresy-hunting in the field of genetics.

That the principles of beauty and goodness are not the subject of science is taken almost for granted by the author, but the recent attempts to derive some kind of ethic from science demands and has received his attention. The matter is dealt with quite simply. No natural science deals with rational actions as such, which is the subject of ethics; thus it is impossible that science should be able

to construct an ethic. Science is concerned with what happens, ethic with what ought to happen—and there are no oughts in science. No description of how men do behave can tell us how they *should* behave. Furthermore the moral life is free, there are not in it the necessary connections that would enable the individual case to be treated by scientific methods. Since the publication of Dr. Caldin's book, Professor Bernal has made the point that though individuals may be free, their freedoms cancel out when masses of them are considered, and statistical laws of human behaviour might be formulated, so leading to a scientific ethic. But this surely postulates that the average of human behaviour remains constant or changes in some predictable manner, which does not seem to be true. Nor, indeed, if it were true would it be significant for ethics. The ethical actions are those of individuals and there is no reason why statistical laws of human behaviour should guide them. Evidently, the function of science in the moral life is simply to suggest means of arriving at ends.

Lastly, what is the social function of science? In the first place it should promote an honest and rational mental climate, which should react against the propaganda of the totalitarian rulers. I say 'should', because I do not think there is much evidence that it has done so. Scientists preserve truth-in-science, but they are apt to regard all other types of statement as uncertain or unimportant, and to retire from the attempt to combat error outside their chosen field.

The second function of science in society is obvious, namely, to get things done. Science has vastly increased the effectiveness of every detail of industry, transport, warfare and public health, and will continue to do so. If we desire a society in which man's wishes can be easily carried out, we must applaud the progress of science. In fact, just as the sudden accession of wealth reveals the true character of an individual, so has it also revealed the character of our society, subjecting us to a test, in which we are not doing very well.

Yet perhaps the most important effect of science upon our society has resulted from its modification of our idea of man. Science considers man as a physico-chemical system, as a member of the animal kingdom, and at the highest as the unit of the masses which are the subject of anthropology and social science: it does not study him as a rational being, as the being who can comprehend an image of the whole cosmos in his little brain, as a

being who can sacrifice his interests to his love. Thus the view of man based on natural science alone is a degraded view and the age that holds it has degraded man as he has never been degraded before.

In all this, nothing has been said to decry science, which is altogether admirable in its own field. Troubles and dangers arise when science is applied where it is not applicable, or used to fulfil the evil desires of men. We should not desire less science, but science better understood and used by better men.

Dr. Caldin's book is worthy of study by every philosopher and scientist and by all others who are capable of following its arguments. Those arguments are not *a priori*, but based on the study of the method of science, which is no less real than its conclusions. The book leads to the knowledge of the sense in which scientific conclusions are to be taken and the basis on which they rest, and its principles, if assented to, provide the key to a proper understanding of the power and limits of science. Some of us would have preferred to see the fight proceed on the territory of the biologist, rather than the physicist, for it is in the dark places of biology and psychology that those who expect guidance from science place their hopes. If science could discover what goes on in the cell, we might understand life and know if it were only mechanism: if science were to work out the process of the brains we might know that we had no souls: if psychology were to be further developed, it might do for us what religion used to do. . . . These are the expectations at the back of the minds of the young enthusiasts for science: it would be a good work to take up these matters and make the refutation of their fallacies explicit, as it is implicit in the work of Dr. Caldin.

# AESTHETICS AND HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

## Marginal Notes on Mr. Berenson's Views

By DAVID JONES

AS a kind of practising artist who has been asked to write this notice, I shall have to confine myself to a few thoughts, which, as I read it, this book evokes. These thoughts may meander rather much but will be set in motion by some one or other of the author's affirmations or suggestions. This cannot be a critical study, it can be only a partial record of one reader's feelings.

On page 173 there is what amounts to a credal statement, and the author's main thoughts may be seen as something like dogma flowing from one or other of clauses in that *credo*, then there are the subsequent definitions, and, perhaps, the reader feels, there is matter not yet defined, but which it might be held temerarious to deny. The passage referred to reads:

Thus all European art down to this day, with the exception of Gothic in its hour and the Netherlands in theirs, remains Mediterranean. That has been secured by the Italian Renaissance against whose ever present influence rebellion is now raging. We are still the heirs of Greece and Judea and are carrying out their ideals. We are still living in antiquity.

It will be seen at once what serious and complex issues confront the reader. It will be seen that elucidations, qualifying, distinguishing and sub-distinguishing are necessary before we can be sure *what* we are asked to subscribe to in this series of propositions.

In a general kind of way, one feels that one might perhaps find oneself in qualified agreement with the author's main notion. Indeed, in so far as the basic idea, reduced to its barest terms, is that our debt to the Mediterranean cultures is, one way and another, beyond all calculation, then one is naturally in *entire* agreement. It is, however, where he clarifies, elucidates, defines, that we find

<sup>1</sup> *Aesthetics and History*, by Bernard Berenson. (Constable. 15s.)



our disagreements; and in his asides, sometimes in his tone of voice, in his inferences, and especially in his aspersions, strictures and condemnations, that we find our disagreement emphasized. As far as I can at present tell (and this book requires far more than one reading), I feel with him in his enthusiasms and where his affections are directly engaged, but very much not with him in his withholdings of enthusiasm, where his affections are not engaged, or should 'suppressed' rather than 'not engaged' be the word? For it is my impression that having a very defined theory, supported, in his judgement, by all kinds of converging evidence and held with deep conviction, he tends to preclude whatever is not amenable to the particular scheme envisaged.

The particular meaning he attaches to 'art' *vis-à-vis* 'humanism' powerfully sways his aesthetic judgement. Further strong reaction in face of other theorists, connoisseurs, culture-historians, with whom he is in disagreement, may account for a certain reproving and sometimes truculent tone.

'Hellenism' is for convenience the word chosen to best describe what he believes in. The Hellenistic norm. He explains, towards the end of his book, what he means by Hellenism; it would seem to be for him standards and canons of taste and conception current between 500 B.C. and A.D. 500. In fact, roughly what we call 'Antiquity'—it is as simple—and as appallingly complex—as that. He thinks the Italian Renaissance reasserted, carried forward, the findings of Antiquity. Again question after question rises in the mind of the reader, some of which questions seem to me more cogently considered in Spengler's well-known Appollinian-Faustian-Magian theory.

In the practice of an art one so often is aware, both with regard to other artists and oneself, how something very analogous to Spengler's 'pseudomorphosis' operates: Mr. X may, under the impact of such and such forms, motifs, ideas, unconsciously or with deliberation 'imitate' them, but the resultant feeling will be that of the particular genius presiding over the work of Mr. X's hands. It is my impression that the author does not give enough consideration to all this business of metamorphosis. We have seen that, stated very baldly, he is concerned to show that in some sense or other all that is valuable derives from an Hellenistic norm. Supposing, for the moment, we concede that, or rather, let it pass. What then? Does that mean that the metamorphoses of Hellenistic forms demanded by the *numina* of this or that locality are to

be regarded as aesthetically suspect? If so, then we indeed protest. I shall use an analogy to illustrate one ground for objection. The news of our Redemption was told to us in a Latin voice in Judaeo-Hellenistic terms, we received it as Mediterranean news couched in Mediterranean forms; but when a poet of our Western seaboard expressed what that Mediterranean event meant to him, he wrote a poem, three lines at least of which are familiar to us all in modernized form:

Then the young hero stripped himself, that was God Almighty  
strong and steadfast; he mounted the high gallows  
proud in the sight of many, then he would loose mankind.

The MS. is in late West-Saxon, but it is perhaps not without significance that a fragment of this great poem was inscribed in the old Northumbrian dialect of the seventh century on the Anglo-Celtic Ruthwell Cross in Scotland. This suggests a valid and wide appeal in this island. Neither a Jew nor a Greek nor a Roman could have had that particular dream of the rood; not a converted pharisee, not a converted philosopher, nor a converted centurion, could have been granted that particular vision (for art, as they say of Grace, follows nature), only a converted barbarian from the Celto-Teutonic north-west seaboard could offer *munera* of that shape. This, I have said, serves only as an analogy: the northern poem could not have been written except Mediterranean men had brought the story, but no Mediterranean man could have told the dream that that rood dreamed. He would not have known how to make that particular shape. We know still, even after 1300 years, that it is our shape, that is how we would sing of the Passion had we the genius. Or to put it another way: emigrated whites brought the cult-practices of a certain kind of Protestantism to the transported blacks of the American plantations, but if the rhythm-forms of darkest Africa had not still been felt among those black communities, Protestantism would have been denied one of its more interesting phenomena, and we should never have had *Witness*, *Ezekiel Saw The Wheel*, or *Were you there when they crucified my Lord*? It takes all sorts to make a world, and if it was a great labour to make the Roman people, it takes an infinite variety of endlessly and mysteriously interrelated art-forms, labour and stress past reckoning to make up the sum of beauty of the forms which human beings have made 'ad hoc and de novo' as offerings to the Maker who makes all things 'ex nihilo' as a passage in *The Letters of Eric Gill* reminds

us. Now it is only the *numina* of localities and differentiated traditions that could have dictated the metamorphoses in any and every art. This remains true even if we allow the Greek miracle to be at the navel of it all. I do not think the author does justice to this variety, even within his major contention.

In one passage he alludes to Etruscan art (unhappily the word is not indexed and I cannot re-find the particular reference) as being, along with the art of other localities, dependent on Greeks, and of course this Etruscan indebtedness to Ionians is endorsed by modern scholarship; but unless one's eyes have seen what is not there one has felt the lineaments of an apparently other and distinctive *genius* looking out from works labelled 'Etruscan'. And turning from the visual impression which these works have made upon us in museums to the evidence of historians as to the probable origins of the Etruscans and the characteristics of their culture and *disciplina*, we find that what we thought we sensed in the seen works was not altogether illusory: there is an Etruscan 'thing', and that thingness has an aesthetic of its own.

It need hardly be said that all of this is elementary to the learned and perceptive author; he knows it all backwards, but that would seem only to make him the more determined in his belief that regional or racial cultures are to be chiefly thought of as either 'incompetent' or 'peripheral' (the author's words) or ideosyncratic and to be judged in relation to a norm; a norm which he believes is discoverable and which he believes to be best exemplified in the Hellenistic art-forms. This is for various reasons a not unpersuasive theory for some of us, and certainly it is not in essence an unfamiliar one.

Perhaps we 'did Antique', struggling first with the nose of Michelangelo's David and later labouring on a sheet of Michelet with the Aphrodite of Melos, and then perhaps were permitted to 'do life'. Perhaps our studies included anatomy, 'ideal proportions', 'composition' and perspective. Perhaps we dipped into the *Discourses* of Reynolds, all of which helped to link Antiquity with the Renaissance and both with the last vestigial remains of the Academic tradition which again was linked with conceptions of a humanistic convention and canon of taste affecting all the arts. In short, the cultivation of an academic humanism is not alien to us and may still largely condition our minds; so that the author, in so far as he would persuade his readers by an appeal to the concepts deriving from that humanist idea, has the advantage of a certain

wishfulness within the breasts of those readers, and I think on that account alone his theory may occasion sighs of relief. My fear is, however, that the relief may be most felt in academic circles; and whatever may be one's disagreements with the author, it can be taken for granted that he is far too perceptive a man and too experienced in connoisseurship to harbour illusions as to the claims of modern academism to represent, even vestigially, the Great Tradition which he has in mind and to which his heart goes out—to which indeed many of our hearts go out.

It is clearly impossible here to discuss the vast complex of reasons why the notion of an academic norm, supposedly deriving from Antiquity through the Italian Renaissance linked with Humanism and hence affecting our whole concept of man, appears no longer to suffice with regard to what are called the 'visual arts'. Did it seem to suffice, then neither the author of *Aesthetics* and *History*, nor you who read this, nor I who write it, would be the perplexed persons which, I trust, we all three are; for let no one imagine that if they are not perplexed, and more than perplexed, when face to face—really and contactually face to face—with these questions, that they have so much as begun to know anything of the problems of the contemporary artist.

I have already alluded to the failing oracle of the old genuine academism in art schools, but what I said needs to be supplemented, for along with the influences referred to were influences of a far less reputable nature; all sorts and kinds of aesthetic notions of the period, resulting in truly bastard academisms, where the modern instances wholly belied the old saws of a once respectable tradition with which they no longer had any inward affinity. I speak here only of the general situation in the average art school and in this country, c. 1909.

And Frensch sche spak . . .  
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe  
For Frensch of Parys was to hire unknowe.

To appreciate at all fully certain aspects of what is thought of as a revolt against tradition it is almost necessary to have experiential knowledge of the average art school in the period just prior to 1914. Revolt is no word to predicate of what happens, when, in the dissolution of any given tradition, people seek about, experiment and theorize in order to find some criteria by which to proceed. When Mr. Berenson uses the words '... the Italian Renais-

sance, against which rebellion is now raging', it is necessary (apart from the accuracy or inaccuracy of such a presentation of the case) to have a clearer picture of conditions and standards against which the 'rebels' reacted. When in the Liturgy is sung: 'Why do the gentiles rage and the people devise vain things' there is posited an Absolute Good against which a wicked raging and devising is directed. We must emphatically reject any tendency to infiltrate into the matter under consideration any such sentiments. What was the situation in the second decade of this century? Academism, let alone Tradition proper, was already moribund, and all that the student could do was to feel about, explore, consider the opposing opinions of this or that teacher, attempt this or that in search of some criteria that might appear more or less valid or that seemed to suit his capacities or inclinations.

This was the situation forty years ago in the suburban art school world of my own youth. Much has happened; but seen from the inside, and by a person concerned with the immediate problems of practice rather than the problems of connoisseurship, one must record a general development and extension, consolidation or otherwise, of the various tendencies, re-orientations, searchings for yet further criteria, explorations, re-assessments, or what you will. In a general way what looked like happening has happened. The general situation being what a culture-historian might call 'Alexandrian', extreme eclecticism was and is inevitable. That the best of what has been produced during these years has tended to have perfections of a rather personal sort—this or that man pushing this or that notion as far as his sensitivities would allow him in this or that rather limited terrain—this also was and is inevitable. That does not mean that these artists believe in 'self-expression', or are 'trying to be original' still less that because of conceit they will not suffer restraint and 'will not learn from others' (except in so far as these weaknesses may afflict any man), nor does it mean that there are not general problems to be solved—there are always, in the arts, problems general to a given time. In this, at least, the artist is in a position analogous to the historian or the theologian or the physical scientist: the problems to be resolved could not be quite the same as those of any other artists at some other moment in history. Never *quite* the same, sometimes almost totally other. Since 1900 the visual artist has had problems enough to contend with, in all conscience. As I have already suggested, he has had to try and solve them in isolation.



In spite of the dissolution and disillusion inherent in this present phase of the decline of the West, it seems to me that in the visual arts (within that narrow and specialized domain into which those arts have now been relegated)<sup>1</sup> it would be hard to deny that works of great interest, of deep feeling, of integrity, of marked sensitivity, of considerable technical ability have been produced, and some to which the word greatness might perhaps be applied. At all events, seen not from a lay point of view, nor from a connoisseur's point of view, nor from a theorist's point of view, but from the practitioner's point of view, one feels that (apart altogether from merits or demerits) the preoccupations, enthusiasms, directions and tendencies, though diverse, are all seen to be attempts to solve one or other of the problems, set, as it were, for the artists of this age. I do not feel an appreciation of the *nature* of these problems in Mr. Berenson's references to the present situation.

It is a merit of his book that it stimulates the desire to comment. There is, so to say, highly combustible material on nearly every page. One could go on putting down ideas evoked by this book—whether in complete or partial disagreement or in agreement—almost indefinitely and still not do justice to it. The author—and here he has with him the great majority of writers and thinkers on the Arts insists on a distinction between 'art' and 'artefact'. I can see no difference—of kind, but only of infinite degrees, between works of the 'arts of form' once *utility has to any degree* been overpassed and where the quality of *gratuitousness has to any degree* been operative, whether it be a wooden spoon carved by a Welsh peasant for his sweetheart, or Bewcastle Cross, or our old favourite, the Aphrodite of Melos, or Picasso's '*Chandelier, pot et casserole émaillée*', or the enamelled 'Battersea shield' in the British Museum, or the headstones in Cookham churchyard (which my contemporary, Stanley Spencer, loves so well), or the beasts in manganese in the Lascaux caves, or Fouquet's Virgin of Melun, or the Capel Garmon fire-dogs, or Leonardo's Virgin and St. Ann. In all these almost absurdly diverse works, utilitarian death has been swallowed up in the victory of the gratuitous. It is the

<sup>1</sup> It is urgently necessary to remember that, in the present phase of our civilization, the 'artist' as such is no longer an integral part of a living culture; he has to swim against the tide. This is a reversal of his natural role. It means at bottom that his activity is as alien to materialistic mass-civilization as is the activity of the ministers of a sacramental religion. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of this situation in regard to 'art' today in contrast with the arts of the great cultures.



only rubicon I know of dividing the activities of man. I understand the theologians to say that God's creation of the cosmos was a gratuitous act: it is interesting therefore that it is that very quality of gratuitousness which we recognize in the creative works of man. A kind of worship is implicit in the works of man-the-artist. There is little or no point, so it seems to me, in stressing the differences of degree. I believe the tendency to stress those differences of degree and to posit a difference of kind comes from theorists rather than from workmen, from 'philosophers' rather than from 'makers'.

Since writing the above I have read an important review of Mr. Berenson's book in which the reviewer, in his interesting appreciation and criticism of the author's main theme, the 'classical approach', says: 'Uncomfortably we know that Mr. Berenson is right, yet our unreason wickedly calls us to resist his blandishments.' I feel that something like the reverse is more true, and that while our inclinations and predispositions might perhaps attract us to the notion, our reason and our experience make us—perhaps uncomfortably—aware that neither classicism nor humanism are the whole story—not by a very long way. The author says that this book is only a kind of foreword to a detailed and comprehensive survey of the 'arts of form' with the express intention of examining and demonstrating what he regards as their decline. 'We shall,' he writes, 'be investigating what happened in the visual arts and particularly to the arts of visual representation during their decline, when they lost first form, then composition and finally shape itself'. It looks rather as though the prisoner were pre-judged. This does not sound so much like an 'investigation' as a series of condemnations following upon a particular interpretation of such words as 'form', 'composition', 'shape'. It is precisely over the interpretation of such words that the main disagreements disclose themselves. When further we read, on page 230, the words 'flaccid puerilities and crudities' to describe, for example, certain phases of Coptic, Saxon and Merovingian art, we see how deep those disagreements may be. One begins to wonder what might be the verdict upon those marvellously virile abstract forms which the Celts of the La Tène culture contrived partly from 'Mediterranean' motifs.

One wonders if we are asked to regard the well-known sixth century B.C. Attic fragmentary marble 'Moschophoros' as having less 'form' than, say, the better-known Roman marble copy of the

second century B.C. Greek bronze called 'The Boy and The Goose', or whether an early work like the fifth century B.C. marble Kore, dedicated by Eurthydikos on the Acropolis (now in the Athens Museum) would be regarded as showing a 'degeneration of representational art' if it had been made some centuries after, instead of some centuries before, the age of Praxiteles: for even the word 'representational' is ambiguous and requires definition: it depends upon *what* is the 'thing' which the mind of a particular culture at a particular phase (or of a particular individual in some late phases of civilization) is impelled to 're-present'. So that, as with the word 'form', the word 'representational' used of the arts can have a number of connotations, about which the most serious disagreements are liable to arise; disagreements which are as crucial (at their own level and within their own context) as those profound and central disagreements which hinge on the meaning of the word 'real' as used by theologians of the Presence in the Sacrament; where the burning questions: in what sense 'real'? in what sense 're-present'? have for centuries divided and confused Christians. So also in the visual arts, and for that matter all the arts, what is meant by the word 'form'? what is meant by the word 're-present'? is of the first importance—for all judgement of the comparative merits of art-works is conditioned by the interpretation of those words. For example, have the paintings of Turner less 'form' than those of Claude Lorraine? Have the 'sketches' of Constable less 'form' than his 'finished' paintings? Is the Christ in the tympanum at Vézelay less 're-presentational' than Michelangelo's Moses? Absurd questions perhaps, yet they illustrate the necessity of first elucidating the sense in which we use such words as 'finish', 'form', 'represent', 'shape', 'composition' and the like. At all events, in the practice of an art, whether of making a writing or making a drawing or making a wooden spoon, one learns something of the surprising contradictions and metamorphoses which such words must be made to cover if they are to be used other than in some narrow, arbitrary, convenient-for-the-occasion, academic or superficial sense.

In law there is the division between courts of Justice and courts of Equity—well, in the arts *all* cases have to be taken to Chancery; and if the pun may be forgiven me, it will be remembered that Aristotle, quoting Agathon, says, in the *Micomachean Ethics*, ch. 4, 'Art loves chance and chance loves art'. It is not at all that there are no 'rules', but they are rules subject to a million contingencies

and a kaleidoscopic variation; and it is not unimportant to bear in mind that the spirit blows where it lists, though that statement also can and does lend itself to abuse. There is a story, whether legendary or not I do not know, that Turner, being asked about the art of painting replied, 'Painting is a rum business' and no more. Perhaps he was wise, all things considered. Of course one can't leave it at that, but that reputed saying of a very, very great artist has its usefulness in reminding us that, in practice, all the arts are more of a rum business than the most perceptive appreciators tend to allow. Beauty ever old and ever new is apt to take us unaware, sometimes in apparent contradiction to what may seem to us most invulnerable theories.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### OUR UNIVERSITIES

*The Crisis in the University.* By Sir Walter Moberly. (S.C.M. 15s.)

To the cobbler there is nothing like leather, and Sir Walter Moberly, whose life has been devoted to Universities, makes so much of them that he has no difficulty in demonstrating that British Universities to-day fail disastrously, if they could, or should, fulfil the immense ends he proposes for them. Dr. Johnson's feet were more firmly on the ground when he asked that a University should be able to say, 'Here is a place where anything can be learnt', and meant any particular subject, not 'Here is a place where men are formed and developed and given fundamental and satisfying answers to guide them through life.' Students keep short terms for three or four years, with a particular end in view, and all sorts of good uses can be made of this time and opportunities to do and enjoy other things beside the main study. But too much must not be made of the business, as too much is made in this book.

With the increasing democratization of the Universities, the experience is coming to mean less and less, and the graduate even of the older Universities is less and less differentiated from his brother who does not go up and whose daily preoccupation is his work and not preparation for an examination. Many agencies, cheap books and the wireless and the activities of societies have extended to the adolescents of our cities so much that used to be special to the University life. Hence much of Sir Walter Moberly's analysis and criticism is not so much a criticism of the Universities as of our contemporary society. The Universities reflect much more widely-spread contradictions when they want, at one and the same time, quality and quantity, to produce specialized excellence and yet to refuse to seize upon and build upon inequalities, or to recognize that excellence is the work of more than one generation cultivating special interests and aptitudes. It is the inherited memory and knowledge of what the great Universities once were that is responsible for the illusion that they can perform the same rôle again in a society decisively different from that in which they had established their very lofty status. In the University today a youth is influenced all

the time by ideas that come from outside, by reading, by visiting speakers, above all by conversation with contemporaries who are themselves carriers of ideas similarly derived. There is all that, and there is the anxious specialized reading for the final and important examination.

When Sir Walter Moberly looks for a third thing, the influence of the teachers on the taught in a way that is wider than and more important than the teaching for the examination, he is thinking and writing as an Oxford man who did Greats forty odd years ago. He has a nostalgia for a Renaissance humanist ideal of an established and endowed class. But that is just his trouble, that he wants several contradictory things, wants ends for which he is not prepared to will the means, and is unwilling to face the truth that all progress down one path takes him further from other paths. It is the very breadth of his sympathies that in the end makes his book so inconclusive and his prescriptions so ineffective.

He has an easy target with the inadequacy of scientific humanism, with its begging of the central question that man's power over nature, whose extension is the great architectonic end, involves the extending power of some men over others; and who can be trusted with these powers, least of all when there is no doctrine of final individual responsibility to a Judging Deity? He rules out the old classical humanism on much less solid grounds, not on Christian grounds but on secular democratic grounds, because although classical culture is called classical because it is objective, it seems unreal and remote to so many moderns, and strikes the young as far removed from their material preoccupations, and neglects natural science. Like most Oxford Greats men of his generation Sir Walter Moberly has a needlessly bad conscience about natural science, just as he has about having enjoyed the privileged Oxford life before 1914. He is ashamed that the Oxford scientists had to settle down in the Parks, on the periphery, while the central studies of the University dealt with man as a spiritual being. There is plenty to be said about the final inadequacy of classical Humanism, and Newman has said it, but the chaotic condition of Oxford today has come because the custodians of the older classical tradition lacked the courage of their convictions, and behaved like Quislings, intimidated by the loud but mainly false claims of the champions of a more scientific and a more democratic Oxford. A hundred years of Oxford history from 1850 to 1950 has been the story of two betrayals by those in authority, of the Christians to the humanists, and of the humanists to the scientists and technicians. The lifetime and the work of Benjamin Jowett and H. A. L. Fisher, as one beginning where the other left off in the ministry, contain the whole melancholy story of the double surrender. When we next find that Sir Walter Moberly is troubled because the classical culture is of its nature for a minority, and because its ex-

ponents, if not rich, have been better off than the majority of today's students, we are prepared for the next surrender to the modern mind, when he classes any full return to the Christian University as a spurious remedy, and does so not only because Christians are a minority but because they have no right to any particular self-confidence in their beliefs.

A man who writes as though because the Christian Revelation is not complete, Christians ought to go about as men with 'a partial perspective' and 'fragments of truth', looking for other perspectives and fragments, from Marx and Nietzsche and Freud, who 'may have a word for our generation to refuse to hear which would be to be deaf to the voice of God' has really very little ground for deploring the welter of confusion and scepticism in the Universities today. To him the motto of Oxford, *Dominus Illuminatio Mea*, and the precedence of the Regius Professor of Divinity immediately after the Vice-Chancellor, are historical survivals in a place whose essential principle is the quite different one of free inquiry. He writes: 'Domination by theologians is no less objectionable than domination by any other group. Any implied claim to infallibility is unChristian since it clashes with Christian insight into human creatureliness and human corruption. Milton has proclaimed unforgettably that it is not till Our Lord's second coming that all the scattered fragments of truth will be reassembled.' The plain suggestion is that, because everything has not been made clear, there attaches no special authority to what has been revealed. The use of the bad subjective word 'insight', although neither creatureliness nor corruption require much insight, is generally a sign that a Protestant Christian is about to abandon any particular claim for objective and authoritative revelation, which if it was given, and if it is true, is quite evidently on an entirely different footing to the elements of natural truth a Marx or Freud may discern. Whatever Milton, not the best of theological guides, thought, Our Lord and his Apostles spoke with authority, and demanded that their authority should be accepted; they were not content to bring contributions towards a wider synthesis, but they presented the good news, the new and wonderful faith, in the light of which everything else had to be from henceforward seen and ordered.

Sir Walter speaks much more firmly and clearly a little later on when he produces a list of basic values, universal, western and British duties of reasonableness and goodwill, and he even employs the word heretic for whoever does not agree that 'men are never to be treated simply as slaves or cannon-fodder, as beasts of burden or material for scientific experiment'. Here, he says, there can be no open mind, and it is something to find some solid ground, although not much building then takes place upon it. The specifically British basic values are given as tolerance, an underlying fraternity, as ordered freedom, and as a con-



viction that 'Democracy is meaningful and right'. But the great merit of these propositions seems to be not that they are true but that they are agreed by all the main elements wanting to use our Universities, whereas the National Union of Students will not have any however diluted Christianity; and so none there must be. 'As regards the University,' he writes, 'Christians will be on firm ground so long as they claim freedom of action for Christian, as for other groups within the University, which is itself neutral and uncommitted on the Christian-secularist issue' (p. 137). The most half-hearted Christians could hardly claim less or be more diffident, and yet elsewhere in this work the same author sees and says so very clearly that this neutral attitude is a figment of the imagination, that in practice to organize studies or corporate life leaving the Christian revelation to one side is to take up a very decided attitude that it can be left to one side; i.e. that it is unimportant, which it can only be if it is untrue. What he says in effect to Christians is, 'as so many of the population do not believe, let us organize our studies and our University life as though they were right and we were wrong; they want it like that, and we must not mind'. Impressed and shaken for a while by Mr. T. S. Eliot's more robust conceptions of how a creative Christian minority might conduct itself, Sir Walter Moberly, a few pages later (p. 156), says "Christians should work for an open University. This does not mean a University which is shapeless or neutral." Although in the next sentences he makes it very plain that it is to be neutral, for there are to be 'no tests for teachers, no articles of faith, however widely drawn, which will be prescribed as conditions of service. This will not be because a teacher's philosophy of life is irrelevant to his fitness for his job; sometimes it is relevant to the highest degree,' but is because tests put a premium on hypocrisy and do not test the right things. There is no need to ask for such tests. When Hilaire Belloc wanted to be a History Tutor at Oxford, no apparatus of tests was necessary; the college just made other choices. Philosophers could be destructive logical positivists, and historians could be anti-Christian, either in an old liberal or marxian fashion, and they were made very welcome, even by men in orders in the Established Church, by men who, in fact, steadily preferred unbelief to Catholicism.

Sir Walter Moberly moves uncomfortably all the time between two poles, wanting to be at once strongly Christian and strongly liberal, and ultimately liberal instincts are left in the ascendancy, which leaves us with the feeling that the Dons' Christian Movement, which he suggests as part of general programme for the Christians in Universities to work more closely together, will have little to say or do if it interprets Christian charity as the same as flaccid geniality and a readiness to believe that everyone has some truth in him and much good. At the end of the work we are reminded of the address, in *Rejected Addresses*, which lightly touched a similar weakness in the Rev.

George Crabbe. 'How extremely improper would be any allusion, however slight, to give any uneasiness, however trivial, to any individual, however foolish or wicked.' Amiable as this attitude is, it is somewhat inadequate as the basis for policy towards the Universities, for the more Christians want to love the sinner the more they must hate the sin; and it is to offer no real remedies, or more hopeful lines of approach to a bad state of affairs if the root causes of that bad state are treated with so much respect and reverence. Liberalism is a powerful and persuasive creed but it is not Christianity, and the havoc in the Universities has come because liberal principles triumphed too completely and Christian principles were too much diminished and thrust too completely aside. A much more emphatic redressing of the balance than anything Sir Walter Moberly advocates is called for, because the error and straying have been so great, and the results so grave.

DOUGLAS WOODRUFF

### THE GIFFORD LECTURES

*Religion and Culture.* Gifford Lectures delivered in the University of Edinburgh in the year 1947. By Christopher Dawson. (Sheed & Ward. 10s. 6d.)

*Religion and the Rise of Western Culture.* Gifford Lectures delivered in the University of Edinburgh, 1948-1949. By Christopher Dawson. (Sheed & Ward. 15s.)

HITHERTO it has been difficult to name Mr. Dawson's central book. As a sociologist, his most important work was probably *Progress and Religion*; as an historian, *The Making of Europe*; but some may have felt that the range of his mind was best seen in the volume of *Enquiries*, which contains among much else the paper on 'Cycles of Civilization', written before Mr. Dawson had read Spengler, and before Toynbee's system was committed to paper. Now there is little doubt that his two volumes of Gifford Lectures become the keystone of his work. The first series makes his fullest statement of the relations between religion and culture; the second series examines the particular example of the influence of religion on Western culture down to the fourteenth century, covering the ground of *The Making of Europe* with a more concentrated purpose and a more rapid pace, and roughly doing for the high Middle Ages what that book did for the Dark Ages. It is a pity that the publishers have not produced these volumes in the familiar and agreeable format of Mr. Dawson's earlier books. For this there may be good technical reasons; the production and indexes are excellent, and the illustrations to the second volume are chosen with Mr. Dawson's usual

subtlety; but it seems inexcusable that these two volumes do not even themselves have uniform spines—the second (although wider than the first) carrying a neck-twisting inscription from bottom to top: a barbarity that should have perished with war economy standards.

The subject of the Gifford Foundation is natural theology; Mr. Dawson supplies a sociology of natural theology. It is the distinction of his sociology that he regards culture as the form of society (i, 48), and religion as the essence of culture (i, 191–2). Though he finds the first experiment in natural theology in Ikhnaton's solar monotheism (i, 122), and the first true natural theology in the Vedanta (i, 96); he makes a broad sweep through primitive religion. The first series is largely built round the distinction between the three religious types of Prophet, Priest and King, illustrated by the North American shaman and Islam, the sacerdotal archaic cultures and especially the Vedic priesthood, the Pharaoh of Egypt and the sacred kingship of the Yoruba. This is profound, satisfying, and so far as I know original. Mr. Dawson redeems the reproach once made by Calvin, that while the Papists admit the three Messianic offices of Christ, they pronounce them *frigide nec magno cum fructu*.<sup>1</sup>

The most valuable thing in the second volume is its discussion of the *differentiae* of Western Civilization. 'What distinguishes Western culture from the other world civilizations is its *missionary character*—its transmission from one people to another in a continuous series of spiritual movements' (ii, 12). Mr. Dawson ascribes it to a sociological cause, the dualism between barbarian society and the Christian Church (ii, 17, 23, 170–2), but he does not clearly relate this to the ultimate tension within Christianity itself, at once world-consecrating and world-condemning, seen in the political dualism between Romans xiii and Apocalypse xiii (cf. ii, 34–5, 75–6). He emphasizes most ably the dialectical character of mediaeval history, its internal tensions which produced ever richer harmonies down to the thirteenth century and then dissolved in discords (ii, 243–4). 'The study of religion begins and ends on the theological level' (i, 22), but Mr. Dawson writes squarely as a sociologist, refusing the seductions of theological apriorism. We may suspect, however, a solecism of method when he places the theological view of Christianity beside the anthropological view of the archaic religions, contrasting the Christian liturgy, which represents the sacred history of the Redemption, with the archaic mysteries, which reflected the cycle of nature (ii, 41). If Christianity is true, Tammuz and Osiris have their ultimate significance as premonitory echoes; if we surrender to a naturalistic explanation of the precursors, how shall we control a Frazerian explanation of Christianity itself? (cf. i, 138).

This second volume contains lucid and concentrated historical writing of a very high order, and criticism is blunted by the obvious

<sup>1</sup> *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, lib. ii, cap. xv, 1.

answer that a course of lectures cannot say everything. He omits to discuss the numinous character of the Apostolic See in the Dark Ages, through the identification of the pontiff with St. Peter himself (there is an example at ii, 124 n). He implies that Carolingian culture was pacific, the warlike character of Western society being reasserted only in the resistance to the Scandinavian onslaught of the ninth century (ii, 101-2); some would argue that St. Boniface's work had already been undone by Charlemagne's conquest of the Saxons. He shows repeatedly how high ideals are fruitless without social roots and soil: the later Carolingian Empire was 'a pretentious sham' (ii, 170), the Truce of God was ineffective (ii, 176-7), the Italian Ghibellines did not proportion their romantic aims to their political means (ii, 252-3), and the society of Languedoc revealed its weakness in its inability to produce leaders as tough as Simon de Montfort (ii, 187). (The last example is perhaps dangerous, and Mr. Dawson is less ready to illustrate the abuse of the crusading weapon from the destruction of the Albigenses than from the capture of Constantinople and the war against the Hohenstaufen: ii, 254, 150, 263). But the roots and soil of society are the level at which religion works, as Butterfield also has lately said. What the historian studies usually 'is a very small part of the total picture, and . . . the creative activity of religion is most powerful where it is least recorded and most difficult to observe—in the minds of the masses and in the traditions of the common people' (ii, 268).

Not many historians have delivered the Gifford Lectures: perhaps only Warde Fowler and Edwyn Bevan before Mr. Dawson. It is not to be doubted that he should be classified with them, in the last analysis, rather than as a sociologist. He asserts the primacy of historical knowledge: the relations of religion and culture 'can only be studied in the concrete, in their total historical reality' (ii, 4). He sees world history as a single story. His conception of the 'archaic culture' very usefully comprehends what Toynbee analyses as some eleven different civilizations—roughly all the civilizations that flourished before the supreme convergence of the eighth to the fourth centuries B.C., which produced the Prophets and Zoroaster and Socrates, the Buddha and the Bhagavad Gita and Confucius. And thus he sees 'the way in which the mind of Western Christendom reconquered the lost world of Hellenic science and annexed the alien world of Moslem thought without losing its spiritual continuity or its specifically religious values' (ii, 234), not as a sociologist's paradigm, but as an immensely important act of a continuing drama. Dawson is not yet required reading in sociology departments; but the professionals have never succeeded in turning historiography into a closed shop (cf. ii, 5), and on this more humane and comprehensive Parnassus he already has his assured place.

MARTIN WIGHT

## THE CATHOLIC REFORMATION

*The Catholic Reformation.* By Pierre Janelle. (The Bruce Publishing Co. Milwaukee, U.S.A. Pp. 397, \$4.50.)

THERE is little need to introduce this distinguished professor of the university of Clermont-Ferrand to anyone interested in the problems of Reformation history. M. Janelle's published work on Stephen Gardiner, on Bl. Robert Southwell and on English religious life on the eve of the great change have won him a high reputation in these studies, and it was with no surprise that one heard that he is to write the volume on the Reformation in England in the great history of Fliche and Martin. Here, meanwhile, is a highly important book of a more popular kind, that covers a vaster field; a learned, skilful, and far from unsuccessful attempt to tell the ordinary man the meaning of what it has been more usual to call the Counter-Reformation—which question-begging terminology M. Janelle, and how rightly! will not use. The fact is that this is a Reformation which began while Luther and the other heresiarchs were still, to the best of their own knowledge, good Catholics; and the effect of their defection was to complicate and hinder the progress of reform by thrusting upon the Church a fight in which its very existence was the stake.

The central event of the great accomplishment, as this author sees it, is the Council of Trent—the central event, and not the first beginning of the new age. Trent was itself the product of forces—the work, rather, of personages—long active, for the best part of half a century, in a religion-rooted endeavour to restore the holiness of Christian life. It is one of M. Janelle's first cares to establish this great truth, and to relate the Tridentine achievement to the activities of that world of Christian humanism whose major figures were Erasmus and our own St. Thomas More.

He begins his book with a series of chapters which show, with vivid and startling detail, how the disease that afflicted the Church was anarchy; how there never was a time when, from somewhere within the Church, there were not movements to arrest the anarchy; how it was that so much of this good will came to so little; and how real the difficulties were that obstructed the determination even of popes bent on reform. We are now about one-fifth of our way through the book. There follows a bold attempt to compress the story of the great council into the thirty pages or so which is all the scale of the book allows, and then comes what is the main part of the author's subject—an account of what the great minds whose work Trent was, ultimately accomplished through the gradual obedience of Christendom to the council's canons and decrees.



It is a tricky business to present this wealth of detail, the history of a world-wide religious revival that fills a good hundred years, in such a way that it is no mere catalogue but the visible drama of great personalities triumphing over contented and powerfully established mediocrity; and for his organization of the enterprise (a feat few can realize who have not had to attempt something like it) M. Janelle deserves high praise, as he deserves it for the brilliant way he carries out his plan. In the last third of the book he takes us from one to another of the countries which were the principal theatres of the Catholic Reformation, Italy, Germany, France, the British Isles and the newly discovered lands of the Americas and the East Indies. But the heart of the book (and what will perhaps be its most useful novelty to readers and students generally) is an interesting summary discussion, that runs to 150 pages, of the relation of the Tridentine revival to the whole culture of the time, to education and scholarship as such, to literature, to art, to the forms of piety and mysticism. Here is a whole wealth of information that has never before been brought together in a book of this kind, an endeavour to show the effect of contemporary culture upon Trent no less than the effect of Trent upon the culture of the next century following. Here, too, Trent is seen as central.

It is not uncommon for reviews to consist of two very dissimilar sections, linked by some such word as 'But' or 'Nevertheless'. The criticisms which we have to offer of M. Janelle's book have no relation of this sort to what has been said of its very substantial merits. It is indeed such a book as English readers have never before possessed, and it is bound to be remarkably useful to all students of modern history.

The one matter which really irks the reviewer is not any fault in the author; it is the publisher's choice of a translator. Who this is we are not told, but the result is very poor indeed, and it is hard to believe that it is the work of one whose mother tongue is English. The simple, classic clarity of M. Janelle's own style here disappears utterly. Nor is it merely a matter of unrhythmical sentences teeming with polysyllables. The translator's ignorance of idiom betrays him into errors as exasperating as they are ludicrous. We read of the Abbé Constant's 'bulky and intelligent work', and the pope makes 'the painful pilgrimage of the seven churches'; St. Vincent de Paul founds 'the Maidens of Charity', and St. Francis de Sales insists on 'man's need of a conductor'. 'Beau' invariably becomes 'beautiful', and 'tome' is rendered always by 'tome'. We have 'sadness' where English would say 'gravity', 'ungracious' where we should have 'thankless'. Peter Faber is 'reading theology', where the author says he is 'lecturing about theology'. When for 'also' we have 'even', it is more than a nuance that is distorted. 'Protestants', we are told, 'stressed the unworthiness' of man: it should of course be man's 'worthlessness'. Neologisms such as '*The Spiritual Fight*' for



Scupoli's classical treatise suggest a translator who is out of touch with the subject matter of what he is translating; and we do not use such terms as 'the Virgin Mary' or 'the Holy Saviour'. What are we to make, again, of 'the orison of recollection'? The pope, we are told, abolishes local liturgical uses wherever a diocese has not had 'a proper liturgy' for two centuries. Names are Latinized or Frenchified in a very haphazard way, 'Possevinus', 'Oliverius Manareus', 'Lucrece Borgia'. On the other hand Emile Mâle is referred to as 'Mr. Mâle', and the founder of St. Sulpice as 'Mr. Olier'.

What of M. Janelle's account of his subject? Each man has his own way of envisaging the task before him, and it is of course not criticism at all to suggest, 'This is the way I should have written it', but a confession of inability to criticize. And it is worse still if the critic hints that an approach different from his own proves the author ignorant of vitally important facts. This said, the one thing really lacking, it seems to me—and the lack of which tells throughout—is a treatment adequate to its importance of the Catholic Thought of this century and a half, and by 'Thought' I mean first of all thought about basic Catholic ideas, I mean Theology. Reformation history is not by any means the simple black and white business that it seems to the untrained apologist—social, economic, juridical, and political factors influenced the course of events continuously, and they need to be studied most carefully. But the core of the whole business is theological, the introduction of a new set of doctrines as the true interpretation of the fundamentals of the Christian religion. The state of theology in the last generation before the theological revolt begins must, then, be a paramount consideration; and if the achievement of the succession of theological writers thenceonwards is left out of account, we necessarily have a Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark.

It is from what I suggest is a weakness here, that whatever is weak in M. Janelle's otherwise fine book derives, or so I believe. He does not show himself sufficiently at home with this part of his subject, and he leaves it alone—except that, like murder, it will out. And when it bursts through the seams and tucks of the construction it can make an odd appearance, not very surprisingly. It is odd to read of Trent that, 'unlike previous councils it could lay no claim to universality'; or that this council 'stressed the importance [of the Mass] in public worship'; that St. Robert Bellarmine 'should not be given the whole credit for the Thomist revival'; that 'the Jesuits once again made St. Thomas Aquinas the prince of theological studies'. When M. Janelle comes to write his important chapter on *Piety and Mysticism*, this lack gives his book the curious air of being written from outside. A reader who was not a Catholic might be led to think, erroneously of course, that for this author 'Mysticism' was all a matter of finding the best 'method' and sticking to it, and that the great mystics of this time, St. Teresa, St. John

of the Cross, St. Francis de Sales for example, are chiefly important as pioneers in the construction of such methods.

It is again—so it seems to me—due to this neglect of Theology that, in a curiously naïve way, the very elements of perennial Christianity seem to be suggested as almost the proper discovery of the mystics of the Catholic Reformation. And an outlook primarily theological would surely have saved the author from attributing to a neo-Platonic reaction against Aristotle the insistence of the Catholic Reformers that outward practices where there is no interior religion are mere abuse. It was not, assuredly, from any consideration of Plato's notion of the beauty of man's soul that the Catholic opposition sprang to the pessimist heresy of Luther. To quote Luis of Granada marvelling at the heights to which Plato's philosophy rose is all very well. But what of the comment, 'Here we come very near indeed to Teresian mysticism'! And what of the methodology which uses this as an evidence that Spanish mysticism must have been open to Neo-Platonic influences? And what is one to say about this other suggestion, viz., that Spain 'provided an especially favourable ground for the blossoming of mysticism' because Arab religious habits were still so strong there, and so many monks and nuns, being newly converted Moriscos, 'were acquainted with the traditions of Moslem meditation, and cannot but have had a natural bent for the religious life'—what is one to say, except the old truism that to write about mysticism without continual reference to the theology of Grace, is almost necessarily to write in the air. It is with great surprise, here, that one finds M. Janelle recommending as a guide the work of M. Jean Baruzi, while he never so much as mentions the more recent classic work of Fr. Bruno de Jésus-Marie which, in a most critical way, simply blew M. Baruzi's fanciful hypotheses out of the water.

There is, again, a world of difference between those two excellent friends St. Thomas More and Erasmus, who are rightly acclaimed as the twin princes of the Humanism that is Christian and whose objective is the restoration of true Christian life—but without a theological presentation of the rôle in Christian life of prayer, penance, and the sacraments, the kind of thing which that difference is goes unexplained. Only too often what M. Janelle is presenting, in his extracts from Erasmus—and from Bl. Robert Southwell also and from George Herbert—is not Catholicism at all, but the Natural Law. Erasmus was anathema to the Catholic Reformation, once this got under way. And it was not merely for his gibes at bad monks and ignorant priests. Something therefore needed to be said in such a book as this about the inevitable insufficiencies that resulted from the great scholar's ignorance of the classical theology of the schools, if only in order to explain why his once great influence now so suddenly stopped short.

The fact needed to be brought out, I think, that by the time Luther revolted there was already in progress a great revival of that classical

theology; its seat was the Order of Preachers and its sign was the publication (which began in 1507) of Cajetan's great commentary on the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas. Of the work of Cajetan, who is one of the main forces in all theological history, and the greatest theological thinker of this century—as well as a great restorer of his order's vitality—M. Janelle has not a word. Nor is Vittoria mentioned, nor Báñez except as one of St. Teresa's directors. The significance has, again, escaped our author of the presence at Trent of an extraordinarily high proportion of Dominicans bred in this theological restoration—twenty-three bishops alone, for example, more than a half of the total of regular bishops present; bishops and theologians together the Dominicans formed just over a third of the total regulars there. Not the least illustrious fruit of this revival was that first-class theologian St. Pius V: it is not a chance coincidence that the one pope to figure in the band of Counter-Reformation saints was a Dominican. And this same theology played a most important part in the formation of St. John of the Cross, of St. Francis de Sales, and of St. Philip Neri too.

Finally the book has nothing to say about the discussions on Grace which now begin to divide the Catholic Universities of Louvain and Douai, that centred round Michel du Bay, the prophet who foreshadowed Jansenism—and what woes. Nor is there any mention of the still noisier clamour of the controversy *De Auxiliis*, when for the first time Dominicans and Jesuits really clashed in public opposition.

We own to a certain disappointment at M. Janelle's account of events in England. True his space is limited—twenty-two pages only—and his interest, once he has described the reforms planned in Pole's great synod, is mainly the effect of the Recusant devotional literature upon seventeenth-century Anglicanism. But allowing in full the importance of this long neglected business, and the merits of Fr. Parsons too, it seems over-liberal to give five of the twenty-two pages to an analysis of *The Christian Directory*—and never so much as to refer to the *chef-d'œuvre* of this Recusant literature (and scholarship) the Douay Bible. Few writers have more enriched the English language than the scholar responsible for it, Gregory Martin; and Allen was well worth a mention along with Parsons as a stylist. Again we must deplore that something that is even more fundamental than devotional literature has not attracted the author's enthusiasm, and the consequent absence, from the record of writers, of such great names as Kellison and even Stapleton, whom many contemporaries placed in the same class as Bellarmine; and what of the effect upon Laudian Anglicanism of such as these, who in that time when—*pace* our author—the Established Church was wholly and consciously and contentedly Calvinist (save for the insincere apostates from Catholicism) had never ceased, through their controversial writings, to remind Oxford and Cambridge of the traditional beliefs of the Church?

We would like to say much, but dare not, for even the longest review must make an end, of M. Janelle's serious failure to recognize that the essence of what Henry VIII accomplished was a thing without precedent, as the king himself was without imitators. The foundation of the king's new religion was the explicit assertion first, that there is no such thing as a papacy in the Christianity left by Christ our Lord; and secondly, that *by God's decree* each Christian prince is, in his own dominions, the supreme earthly head of the Church of Christ, the source of its knowledge of revelation. It is, of course, not the fact that these theories 'had long been put forward and acted upon by most sovereigns in Europe', nor that Charles V, in the *Interim*, 'had gone almost as far as Henry VIII himself', nor that Philip II fought the popes 'for the maintenance of ecclesiastical powers scarcely inferior to those which Henry VIII of England had claimed a few decades before'. The difference between Henry VIII and all the many Catholic princes who have usurped ecclesiastical jurisdiction at one time or another, is one of kind and not of degree. The Reformation settlement in England was, and it has remained, a thing *sui generis*. It is with regret that we see re-appearing in this book that failure to take account of a vital distinction which is the one serious weakness in this scholar's earlier work on Stephen Gardiner.

We should like to hope that in a future edition the bibliography will include such irreplaceable items as Fr. Bridgett's lives of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More, Fr. Brodrick's fine works on St. Robert Bellarmine and St. Peter Canisius and on the early history of the Jesuits, Mr. Evennett's book on the Council of Trent, and Arnold Oscar Meyer's *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*. It is a surprise too that there is no mention of the indispensable *Documents of the Continental Reformation* edited by Dr. Kidd.

M. Janelle, with great courtesy, delicately hints the serious criticism that Catholics in England have been indifferent to their great treasure, the literature of the Recusants. It is indeed our reproach. The explanation of the failure to explore it and to publish its riches to the world is not, however, hard to find. We have had extremely few writers with the training the work needs—*universitaires* are all too scarce among us; as to others, well, there is never a living in scholarship, the books we need—and for the production of which all cry out—are a whole-time job that barely pays the rent of the author while he is writing them; we have no endowments; and then, this is England—as to which we refer this French scholar to whom English Catholicism is so indebted, to his compatriot, M. de Jouvenel: 'England is rich in administrative talent. . . . The phenomenon has caused the virtues corresponding to it to appreciate. The English, unlike the French, have always set more store on good business than on fine ideas. . . . The good man of business enjoys in England a centuries old consideration which has no parallel in

our Catholic Europe'. . . . England is a country where, 'even in the universities', 'the virtues of administration arouse respect and confer eminence'.<sup>1</sup> It was of us that eighty years ago Newman said 'Catholics are not a reading set', and also that money could be got for anything except the promotion of Catholic scholarship. The generosity of the Catholic publisher, willing to risk money on a book that, over several years, will barely pay for its production—a risk that eventuates much more frequently than is guessed—is not really enough. And so far his interest is our historical scholarship's sole encouragement.

We wish M. Janelle's new book every success, and we look forward to being, in the future, even more deeply his debtors.

PHILIP HUGHES

### COMMUNIST THEORY AND PRACTICE

*The Theory and Practice of Communism.* By R. N. Carew Hunt. (Geoffrey Bles. 12s. 6d.)

*Towards a New Epoch.* By Nicolas Berdyaev. (Geoffrey Bles. 6s.)

THAT Mr. Carew Hunt has written a valuable book on Calvin by no means disqualifies him for writing on Marx. Experience abundantly confirms that Marxism-Leninism is a religious phenomenon of a kind. Denying God, it can have no theology in the strict sense; but in theory and practice it regards the struggle against theology as a fundamental task. It is not the first of the secular religions. Jacobinism is a predecessor; and it is important today to ask the question—to answer it is a matter of some difficulty—whether or not Soviet Communism is far gone in the process of degeneration that led in the case of the Jacobins to the corruptions of the Directory and the creation of the Bonapartist nobility. This process cannot but appear tragic. Even the most ferocious of the ascetics of revolution—Robespierre, Blanqui, Lenin—have a certain moral grandeur as compared with their more Epicurean successors. The degeneration of the revolution is the ending of a dream. And yet to the world that has remained exempt from the revolutionary process it brings considerable relief. Decadent revolutionaries are bad men: the ascetics of revolution, unwearying and pitiless, are scarcely men at all. With bad men one can make arrangements. Genuine revolutionaries must triumph or be broken.

For the English reader Mr. Carew Hunt's book is the best introduction to Communist theory and practice that has so far appeared. It covers a great deal of ground: Marxist philosophy and economics; a

<sup>1</sup> B. de Jouvenel, *The Problems of Socialist England* (1949), 147.



brief history of the European socialist movement; and the Leninist and Stalinist developments of Marxist theory. It is admirably fair and balanced. No informed person is likely to differ very greatly from the author's theoretical conclusions. But now and then he tends to take the present-day Russian Marxists at their own explicit valuation, as inheritors of the Leninist tradition, faithfully continuing the struggle for world revolution; and he does not raise the question how far the degeneration of the Soviet Communist Party and régime has created so great a gap between theory and practice that the prospects for the Western World may not be so forbidding as they are commonly supposed to be. There is some evidence—much of it provided by Mr. Carew Hunt himself—that the will to revolution may be much feebler than the Western World suspects. There was a good deal of exaggeration in Trotsky's theory of a Thermidorian reaction, but there is something to be said for it.

Arthur Rosenberg has shown, in my view conclusively—in any case he speaks with peculiar authority—that from as early as 1920 the various policies imposed by the Soviet Communist Party upon the Communist parties elsewhere were determined entirely by the requirements of the Soviet State in its relations with other States. Stalin and his colleagues have never hesitated to ruin revolutionary movements in other countries if they could see any advantage, even a trivial and temporary advantage, to themselves in doing so. This has led to some tragedies, some farces, and some situations in which there has been a macabre mingling of the two. Twice in relation to Germany—in the years immediately before 1933, and in 1939—the Soviet rulers have snatched at temporary advantages which did incalculable damage to the international Communist movement and brought no permanent advantage to the Soviet State itself. Further, internal developments within the Soviet Union (Mr. Carew Hunt does not make enough of this point) have been such that it is no longer possible for any but the most simple-minded revolutionaries to take seriously the myth of the 'bastion of world revolution'. The wretchedness and cultural backwardness of the masses, the stupid and philistine bureaucracy, the hunting to death of all those prominently associated with the heroic age of the revolution, the grotesque mingling of Caesaro-Papism with militant atheism, these and other features of the régime make it impossible any longer to take seriously the official mythology. The victories of the Communist parties in Eastern Europe sprang almost entirely from the disposition of the armies at the end of the war and the folly of the Western Powers, just as the Communist victory in China was in large measure a consequence of the blindness and incompetence of American policy.

If all this should be true, it does not mean that an accurate knowledge of Communist theory, such as Mr. Carew Hunt so excellently



provides, is unnecessary. The Soviet leaders are to an astonishing degree—very few of them have any experience or understanding of the world outside the Soviet frontiers—the prisoners of their own mythology, and no matter how bungling their behaviour may be from the standpoint of world revolution, they have a strong compulsion to rationalize their behaviour in terms of Marxist theory. Public opinion in the West is liable to be mistaken in two ways. A temporary softening of the Soviet attitude might lead to a revival of the belief (common in the war years and half encouraged by our own propaganda) that the Politburo is composed of rather uncouth liberals or Fabians; but at present, by way of reaction from the naïvety of this belief, there is a belief which may also be wide—not *so* wide, admittedly—of the mark, the belief that the Soviet Communists are as sincere and resolute fanatics as they were in the heroic age of Lenin and Trotsky. The truth may rather be that they are half-conscious Machiavellians who use the mythology of Marxism-Leninism for all it is worth, but who are not prepared—and this is both challenge and opportunity for the Western Powers, who scarcely know their own strength—to imperil the internal power of the régime in adventures which they suspect to be in any degree dangerous. There is a detestable sport common in France in which tame pigeons are released from traps a few paces from the sportsman, who is able, though no great marksman, to shoot two pigeons out of three. Stalin is such a sportsman: the tragedy is that the pigeons shot by him were placed in the trap by us.

There are remarkably few errors in Mr. Carew Hunt's book. Bishop Berkeley should be Bishop Butler (p. 22); Blanqui should be called Louis Auguste, rather than simply Louis, to avoid confusion with Louis Blanc (p. 95); the title of Professor Bernal's book is *The Freedom of Necessity* (p. 212). I am sorry Mr. Carew Hunt should, as do so many others, attach great importance to Marx's Jewish and rabbinical ancestry. There is, I suggest, no satisfactory evidence for its influencing his philosophy. Certainly he has a Messianic view of the proletariat; but Messianic theories are rooted in our culture and are not peculiar to Jews. Marx was, in fact, uncommonly and unpleasantly anti-Semitic in his private correspondence and conversation. Again, Mr. Carew Hunt has taken over from Professor Hook the theory that Marx was in epistemology an Instrumentalist and that on this point he differed profoundly from Engels. The evidence for this view is to be found in a few passages in *The German Ideology* and in the *Theses on Feuerbach*. They scarcely bear the weight placed upon them by Professor Hook. Marx had, after all, no complaint to make about *Anti-Dühring*. Of course, Engels's epistemology, taken over by Lenin, is impossible.

The essays contained in *Towards a New Epoch* are almost the last from Berdyaev's pen. They are in the main concerned with Christianity

in relation to Russia and Communism. It would be pleasant to be able to speak well of them; but the truth is that they do not add to Berdyaev's reputation. They exemplify most of the faults of his writing—vagueness, ambiguity, rhetorical solutions to intellectual problems—and lack the energy and prophetic power of his best work. His deeply-felt Russian patriotism and his nostalgia for the atmosphere of the old Russia of the intelligentsia together persuaded him to sentimentalize over the Russian Marxists of our own day. He shared with some French Catholics the fear that to be a radical critic of Communism was to take sides with bourgeois society; and he committed himself to the fantasy that it is the task of Christians 'to effect an internal transformation in Communism'.

J. M. CAMERON

### HISTORY

*The Middle Ages in the West. A Study of European Unity.* By the Right Hon. Sir Henry Slessor, P.C. (Hutchinson. 21s.)

THE subject of this study is the profound difference between mediaeval—regarded as specifically Christian—and modern society. The long period of development between the crumbling of the Roman Empire and the approach of the Reformation is thus treated as the attempt to struggle out of the chaos that ensued on the collapse of the Imperial administration into a condition regulated by Law and Authority under the inspiration of the Catholic Church. The author's conclusion, which facts and experience have established for him, is that the disintegration of a religious and cultural unity formerly based on the Papacy has now finally dispelled the vision of a corporate Christendom and that moral and cultural anarchy have become inevitable.

The work is divided into twelve chapters of which the first eight are a kind of *précis* of the general history of Western Europe. The following four have somewhat the appearance of separate essays, viz. Government and Law, Mediaeval Philosophy, and so forth. Here the author's thesis is more directly enunciated and more clearly expressed than is possible in a long quasi-chronological narrative that extends from Theodosius to the Council of Florence.

The mass of facts in this period is so enormous that there is room for selection and even for deviation from the findings of many powerfully-equipped scholars; but the author's treatment of them is hardly successful, and indeed it is not easy to discern a plan or pattern in the larger part of the book. Had more specific and limited themes been

chosen, the gain in effect would have been greater than the apparent sacrifice of completeness. The mediaeval attitude—which to a very large extent was the attitude of the Church—towards money, property, women, war, slavery would have furnished very ample material for the author's purpose. Again, mediaeval social theories provide a fruitful subject which has not been exhausted by the brilliant essays of the late Father Bede Jarrett. Sir Henry has, however, relied upon a general narrative in which too many matters have been omitted or have not received adequate attention. England, for instance, fares badly: there is nothing about Benedict Biscop, Venerable Bede or even St. Dunstan. The vast work of the Irish missionaries who evangelized half Western Europe is not mentioned at all. The reader would expect a great deal more about Monasticism in view of its immense formative and stabilizing influence, apart from the effect upon agriculture, architecture, the arts, education, the transmission of the classics by the copyists of the scriptorium, and so forth, and it is difficult to understand why, on the plan chosen by the author, he should have made so little of the enormously important Cluniac Reform. Cities and Universities, again, are put together here in one chapter, though Town and Gown were always distinct and generally at variance.

It is admittedly difficult to avoid overlapping and repetition but there hardly seems sufficient reason for repeated mention of Berengarius of Tours, who denied Transubstantiation, and of Roscellinus, who denied the Trinity. Alcuin is mentioned in five or six places and Gerbert (Sylvester II) in nearly a dozen; but Sir Henry has missed the opportunity of showing that a direct chain of master and pupil connects the two famous scholars and covers exactly the two centuries from A.D. 800 to 1000. The line ran through Rhabanus Maurus, Eric of Fulda, Rémi of Auxerre and Odo of Cluny.

Estimates of the importance of Becket's stand against Henry II vary considerably, but Sir Henry seems inclined to underrate it. The issue was much wider than that of the trial and punishment of criminal clerks. It is of course true that Henry continued to appoint to the chief offices of the Church and that the practice down to the Reformation was not unlike the post-Reformation *congé d'élire*, though the canonical regulations were observed in form. But the stand made by St. Thomas put an end to the policy of general and indefinite encroachment envisaged by Henry II and in particular preserved the all-important matter of appeal and free access to Rome. The number of appeals to Rome from England in ecclesiastical causes was enormous, and when, in 1534, Henry passed an Act that abolished any and every such appeal, he severed the chain of spiritual jurisdiction at its strongest link.

The statement that Innocent III regarded the Emperor Frederick II as illegitimate is certainly wrong and appears to be the result of some

confusion. On the death of the Emperor Henry VI, Innocent at once assumed the position of protector to the baby king with a view to securing his succession in due time to the Sicilian crown, and when the child's mother, Constance of Sicily, died three years later, the young Frederick became in the fullest sense a ward of Holy Church. It was Manfred who was illegitimate and possibly 'Innocent III' here is a misprint for 'Innocent IV'. Considering, too, the vast importance of the struggle against the Hohenstaufen, the momentous pontificate of Innocent IV might well have received fuller treatment; and it was that pontiff who did expressly authorize the use of torture by the Inquisition. Similarly, there is confusion about St. Bernard of Clairvaux. He did not lead the crusade against the Albigenses, for he died in 1153; it was the Second Crusade that he preached. The legate, however, in the Albigensian war, Arnaut Amalric, was actually Abbot of Cîteaux.

Most surprising of all is the statement that 'the Inquisition, as such, was allowed in England in the reign of Mary'. The English courts never at any time took cognizance of the Inquisition. Condemnation by the Bishops' courts and execution of heretics by burning took place under the statute *De Heretico Comburendo* of Henry IV (1401), passed expressly against the Lollards. It was employed by Henry VIII who burned heretics and Anabaptists; three suffered at Smithfield on 30 July, 1540, and under this enactment Blessed John Forest, the Franciscan friar, had been burnt in 1538. Similar executions took place under Edward VI, Elizabeth and James I. Francis Kett, for instance, an atheist friend of Christopher Marlowe, was burnt at Norwich in 1588, the statute, which had been repealed by Protector Somerset, having been re-enacted in 1555. The last to suffer under it were two 'Arians', one at Smithfield, the other at Lichfield, both in 1610. It was finally repealed in 1677.

Errors of detail do not necessarily invalidate general conclusions but they certainly diminish the value of the narrative and could probably have been avoided, had a different plan been adopted. One would expect an author who treats European history at large to be accurate about such matters as the Electors to the Holy Roman Empire or the six ecclesiastical peers of France. Nevertheless there is a great deal in the book which is valuable and well expressed.

The proof-reading has not been very careful: nearly all the Latin phrases have gone wrong. 'Benedict of Alliane' and 'Egidio Collonna' look queer, and by a strange mistake (p. 48) Lorenzo Valla is assigned to the eighteenth century.

J. J. DWYER

## METAPHYSICS

*Phoenix and Turtle: The Unity of Knowing and Being.* By Thomas Gilby.  
(Longmans, Green and Co. 16s.)

THAT the style is the man is an elliptical statement, but an elliptical statement is preferable to a circular argument. Statements are, indeed, of all shapes, elliptical, circular and foursquare, and an exclusive preference for foursquare statements involves knocking oneself against some hard corners. To those who condemn ellipsis we might reply with the query whether speech or writing which eschewed ellipsis could be tolerable. When everything is stated, the trees are so numerous that no wood is discernible and we can never get out of the wood. It is by tangential statement that we leave the wood and can look back at the trees without having to count them. 'You should say what you mean,' the March Hare went on. 'I do,' Alice hastily replied, 'at least—at least I mean what I say—that's the same thing, you know.' 'Not the same thing a bit!' said the Hatter. 'Why, you might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what I see"!'

Such is Fr. Gilby's style, elliptical and tangential by turns, but, if he does not always say all that he means, he certainly means what he says. There is a considerable fascination in following his twists and turns of thought. Nevertheless, for the sake of readers who are not already familiar with the subject, he might be respectfully urged to be a little more explicit and straightforward in future and to make his framework more apparent before he begins embroidering upon it. In his previous book *Barbara Celarent* the more easily assimilable categories and principles of formal logic provided an adequate framework; on a subject like the unity of knowing and being the ordinary man requires a few leading formulae to be expressed as clearly as possible if he is going to find meaning in their detailed exposition.

This time, then, Fr. Gilby is concerned with the approach through the theory of knowledge to metaphysics. The implications of his subtitle are that you cannot do metaphysics without doing epistemology and, still more, that you cannot do epistemology without doing metaphysics. You cannot, at any rate in these days, do metaphysics without epistemology. Philosophy has lost its first innocence as far as the problem of knowledge is concerned, and metaphysics must now be a critical metaphysics taking into account all the questions about knowledge which have been systematically raised in modern times. Fr. Gilby is not without sympathy for the sceptics; indeed it is one of his virtues that he is not without sympathy for anybody. 'A cheerful and ironical scepticism serves a purpose when it salts the heavy insipidities of earnest metaphysicians.' But he looks forward to a time when the stage of mere questioning has been transcended and when epistemological realism is



once again in assured possession of the field. 'The philosophical tradition may be little the worse for its adventure, and even after recovery all the better for its lapse. Digestion is the better for ferments and philosophy is the better for friction, and now for the future realism can have a rasp in its thought and the resolve of never again.'

Equally, however, you cannot do epistemology without metaphysics, for the foundation of realism is that affirmation of being which is also the foundation of metaphysics. Fr. Gilby gives not unkindly notice to 'the dogmatism of good custom, which appealed from the criticisms of the pure reason to the traditions of a going concern', the unformulated pragmatism which has served more modern Englishmen as a substitute for philosophy than has any formulated version of pragmatism. Yet this is not a philosophy but an intellectual expedient. So the rest of the book encourages the reader to discover that he cannot avoid, nor should he wish to avoid, the affirmation that something is, and that through it he is in contact with the other, the objective and the external. Upon it rests the whole edifice of truth and certainty. In a final chapter Fr. Gilby argues from possible and intelligible objects to the existence of an Eternal Mind. He attaches this argument to the Third Way of St. Thomas, but he will perhaps allow us to suggest that here he has for once adopted a line of thought which is even more characteristic of St. Augustine, although not the worse for that.

It may also be suggested that the book would have gained by descending to details about the various types of object, the self, the material world and other minds, which we usually suppose ourselves to know, and by considering the logical status of the judgements that we normally make about them. We have already said that Fr. Gilby might, for the sake of the ordinary reader, sacrifice some of the exuberances of his style, but this is a book which only he could have written, and perhaps it is misguided to wish it any less characteristic of him.

D. J. B. HAWKINS

### HEIDEGGER

*Existence and Being.* By Martin Heidegger. (A translation of four of his Essays; with Introductory Study by Dr. Werner Brock.) (Vision Press. 15s.)

SOME embarrassment may be experienced by any who will study this book in public places. Presuming eyes, unchecked by superior strategy, will memorize for future retailing many astonishing propositions. An example or two may be of interest. 'Dasein is thus, structurally: already-Being-in-the-world, in-advance-of-itself, as Being-concerned-with-beings-encountered-in-the-world.' 'Being, whose unfathomable



and unmanifest essence is vouchsafed to us by Nothing in essential dread.' 'The past originates from the future so as to engender the present.' 'Original thanking is the echo of Being's favour wherein it clears a space for itself and causes the unique occurrence: that what-is is.' 'The projection into Nothing on the basis of hidden dread is the overcoming of what-is-in-totality: transcendence.'

I lay these cards on the table for a grave reason. I greatly fear that a potential reader, turning over the pages of the book, may hastily conclude from the fabulous strangeness of the language that the whole effort is a disordered phantasy. He may note that Heidegger lives an intensely solitary life amid the silence of a remote mountain side; that the one poet whose work he finds richest in profound significance, Hölderlin, fell victim to a mental disorder; and that of his own chief work, *Being and Time*, four of the proposed six parts remain unwritten: two only have appeared, and that in 1927.

Those who have studied any of the writings of Heidegger with searching care and repeated consideration will know that he offers a wealth of ideas, luminous and clearly articulated; a point of departure and a method of advance as valuable as they are new. Language has not yet been schooled to express his thought with brief and familiar ease. Aristotle and Aquinas long since shaped it to their own purpose, so that now we all understand (or so we think) the *cliché* of the Schools: form, virtue, principle, quality, habit, act; the soul is the *form* of the body. Unless and until there is some evident readiness to take up substantial parts of the Heideggerian philosophy—whereupon we may witness some renewal of philosophic language—the dictionary will be Heidegger's enemy. Already it has bottled-up two-thirds of his magnum opus.

It should be emphasized that this thinker has nothing to do with Existentialism. He himself is most emphatic on this point, and his writings leave little room for doubt. True, he continually employs 'existential' analyses of features of human experience for the sake of suggesting, illustrating, or advancing his ideas: but this is a mere preliminary. The unfaltering purpose of all his thinking is to reach Being: not just the reality of things, or what-is, or human being-in-the-world (*Dasein*), or even the moral existence and immanent preoccupation of the human person—but full, final and utter being. He seeks this with a resolution that would have profoundly gratified Aristotle or Aquinas, could they but see how in the intervening centuries Metaphysics has been sidetracked by materialism or subjectivity, total idealism or log-istics. He repudiates these: he scrupulously avoids subjectivity in his approach; and is so frugal in raising presumptions or implications that he seems invulnerable to the grosser forms of attack.

In a brief review, one can hardly attempt an outline of Heidegger's thought. A meeting between himself and St. Thomas would provide

many interesting exchanges. I will suggest an example. In the Essay on Metaphysics, Heidegger seeks to establish for Nothing a place of honour in his system. (His 'nothing', perhaps I should say in passing, is not quite what most of us take it to be.) He argues the order of precedence: does Nothing derive from the negation of thing; or is Nothing more original than Negation? He concludes that Nothing is prior to, and the source of, Negation, and that this breaks the sovereignty of reason in this field of inquiry; that the rule of logic, through the principle of contradiction, can here at any rate be set aside. The whole investigation is masterly; and some (*quorum non pars*) might feel tempted to write it off as a mere piece of virtuosity lacking in substance, were it not for a curious passage in St. Thomas.

In one of the *Quaestiones Disputatae* (V. de Providentia, art. ii) he states the following difficulty: 'There are certain principles governing the whole of creation, which not even God can set aside, such as this, that we may not both affirm and deny one and the same thing.' His reply is interesting: 'The necessity enjoyed by the principles referred to follows upon the ordering of divine providence, in this way: Creation is a multiplicity of things, each sharply defined in its nature, each with its existence correspondingly delimited, each then marked off from its negation. It is from these sharp differentiations that this follows: that an affirmation and its negation cannot be jointly true. And from this principle is derived the necessity attaching to all other principles, as you may read in Book IV of the Metaphysics.' (Derived also, presumably, is all certainty in human reasoning about created being.) The parallel is by no means exact; but it appears that St. Thomas himself was not averse from taking logic down a peg. He was thirty-two at the time of writing.

There is much intellectual experience to be gained from a careful study of this book: strenuous exercise over ground that is strange to the majority of us. A generous attitude is certainly called for in the reader—to the point of folly, almost. Cold accountancy will not suffice; it will not pierce the stiff fabric of a language not yet made supple to new ways of thinking.

None of the experience or exercise will be lost or wasted. Heidegger's aim is altogether admirable, it is in the Great Tradition; his spirit is earnest and intensely sensitive to moral undertones; his integrity will not allow him to advance beyond his entitlement; and his deep knowledge of Greek and Mediaeval philosophy (rare in many quarters today) exercises a salutary influence over his thought. Here will be found no trace of triviality, corruption, or ignorance: it invites, I feel, the generous extension of St. Paul's universal probe.

Dr. Brock's introductory study is immensely helpful, and will have prepared us for a translation of *Being and Time*, whose announcement I shall look forward to with interest.

J. H. MACMILLAN

## THE ART OF T. S. ELIOT

*The Cocktail Party*: A Comedy. By T. S. Eliot. (Faber & Faber, Ltd. 10s. 6d.)

*The Art of T. S. Eliot*. By Helen Gardner. (Cresset Press. 12s. 6d.)

*The Cocktail Party* is entitled a comedy, and its first lines:

You've missed the point completely, Julia:  
There *were* no tigers. *That* was the point

give a promise which is amply fulfilled as the play proceeds: the return of that satirical wit and humour which was so important an element in Mr. Eliot's earlier poetry, and which was seen in his work most lately in the comic passages of *The Family Reunion*. The cocktail party conversations recall the dialogue in *Sweeney Agonistes*, transposed to a higher social level. But they are presented with a blandness, indeed almost an emollience, which is quite without the bitterness of comparable passages in *Sweeney* or *The Family Reunion*. This blandness is characteristic of the verse-technique. The treatment of the language is tender and relaxed:

Ah, but we die to each other daily.  
What we know of other people  
Is only our memory of the moments  
During which we knew them. And they have changed since then.  
To pretend that they and we are the same  
Is a useful and convenient social convention  
Which must sometimes be broken. We must also remember  
That at every meeting we are meeting a stranger.

It is *belle comme la prose*. And it is this distant note of tenderness which qualifies throughout the characteristic acerbity and astringency. As they proceed, the bickerings, inconsequences, fatuities that compose so much 'polite conversation', we become aware of the voices as people, as minds: the stresses and tensions, the revulsions and attractions, the occasional quiet fullness of ordinary living. Through a skilfully composed semi-allegorical series of situations the mysterious intrigues of the psychiatrist Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, a figure remote and mysterious as the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, reach their climax as gradually it is revealed to us that he is not alone in his strange mission, that he has helpers, the 'Guardians'. That chattering, *canapé*-devouring old lady, this urbane Government official with a talent for cookery, exist in another pattern: Reilly himself, the gate-crashing, gin-drinking, anonymous guest, later transformed into the masterful omniscient doctor at his desk, has yet other roles than these.

Opinions have been expressed to the effect that Mr. Eliot's play is

a sort of highbrow *Design for Living*, only not so cynical, of course. It would be a pity if the current theatrical success of *The Cocktail Party* were wholly due to its being received thus. For, light in tone as the play may be, it has a profound subject, and a subtler subject than a bare account of the plot might suggest. At a first reading we might be tempted to emphasize too much in our interpretation the parting words of Reilly to his patients:

Go in peace. And work out your salvation with diligence.

Working out one's salvation is, of course, an explicit theme of the play. The estranged husband and wife, the girl, involved in their estrangement, who is spiritually finer than either of them, the nice, commonplace young man who has to lose the girl—certainly the function of Reilly and his helpers, the symbolic managers of the action, is in part to guide these people back into the right design of their lives: to make them reach a conclusion which shall befit each of them, whether it be domestic reconciliation or martyrdom among savages. But I believe that the deepest subject of the play emerges less in the explicit 'story' than in passages like the subtle dialogue between the girl Celia and the psychiatrist. The subject is change: change considered, not as a philosophical problem, but as a psychological fact. And closely linked with that subject is the theme of appearance and reality in human relationships. The frequent deep error of human beings is to suppose that emotional intensity alone will suffice to transform the first into the second: it is the logic of desire which infers fulfilment from the mere awareness of need. The further suggestion of the play is, perhaps, that we can achieve happiness only by seeing our life as a whole: but that, when we have come to see our life as a whole, happiness may no longer matter. In the background stands always the enigmatic 'sanatorium' of Reilly. Here only one kind of illness, the illness of not being a saint, is cured, and here

The wounded surgeon plies the steel  
Which questions the distempered part.

The artistry of the play is, as we should expect, impeccable. The modulation between the lighter style of the 'comic' scenes and the graver, more intricate passages of self-exploration is beautifully managed, and the use of the Chorus, perhaps something of an embarrassment in *The Family Reunion*, has here become merely vestigial, without loss of the suggestion of ritual which the poet evidently desires. None the less, a perusal of the play leaves a slight feeling of dissatisfaction. I am inclined to think that this arises chiefly from our inability to accept fully two of the characters: Celia and Reilly. It is hard to believe in Celia's martyrdom: this consummation is a dramatic necessity, but the flippant, almost farcical way in which it is described to us seems to

make it even less acceptable. Again, just as it is hard to imagine Celia becoming a nurse, so it is even harder to imagine Reilly ever having become a doctor. The reply to this criticism might be that he is purely a symbolic figure. But then there are moments when Reilly seems to exist solely on the plane of prosaic realism: he is himself astonished at what he is doing, he wonders why he has spoken these strange words of admonition or consolation. I do not think these moments of transposition are very convincing. It is impossible that we should accept Reilly as simply a fashionable psychiatrist; and, if we could, his function would then be too much disguised by what would be, after all, a rather unfortunate allegory. But these tentative criticisms may well answer themselves when the play becomes more familiar, and when it is more fully understood, like so much of T. S. Eliot's poetry, in the light of our developing experience of poetry and life.

The problems we encounter in considering the poet's dramatic technique are discussed in a very interesting chapter of Miss Gardner's book. *The Art of T. S. Eliot* appeared before the publication of *The Cocktail Party*, but many of her remarks in this connexion are strikingly relevant to the later play. She points out, for example, how difficult it is to imagine the main characters in *The Family Reunion* as having any life outside the particular critical situation of the drama; how and why they give us the curious effect of being expressive masks grouped around a central void. Perhaps the idea of the 'objective correlative', as translated into the poet's practice, was too conscious a strategy for connecting personal and private material with a contrived situation external to and different from that which may really underlie the poetry. Miss Gardner is, of course, only incidentally concerned with Eliot the dramatist. Her main achievement, which is superbly carried out, is to establish his whole work in the historic succession of English poetry, and to present the completed poet of *Ash Wednesday* and the *Quartets* as the inevitable successor to the poet of *The Waste Land* and *The Hollow Men*: to trace the progress from the 'boredom' and the 'horror' to the 'glory'. Miss Gardner offers us far more than an elementary exposition of the poems: her commentaries are not programme notes, but patient, learned and sensitive interpretations, which, while offering no substitute for reading the poems, clear away all the extrinsic obstacles to our experience of them. Inevitably, she brings out for us the religious implications of their imagery and pattern. But perhaps the supreme merit of her study is that it does not dwell upon such matters for edification as can and will be extracted from the poetry, but emphasizes that its deeper moral value can only be appreciated when each poem is understood as an aesthetic unity, enriched by being seen in the wider context of the poet's whole work, but itself satisfying, harmonious and complete.

W. W. ROBSON



## 'THE GREAT NEW VENTURE'

*The Yellow Book*. A selection compiled by Norman Denny. (The Bodley Head. 15s.)

WHAT are we to think of the *Yellow Book* today? Shall we do honour to this famous publication, or shall we be tickled by its absurdity, and laugh? It is easy to do either, so let us do both. First for the honours: these are most easily paid by a recital of the names of some of the contributors: Henry James, William Watson, Arthur Symonds, George Gissing, Max Beerbohm, Kenneth Grahame, William Butler Yeats, Baron Corvo, Maurice Baring, Arnold Bennett, Richard Garnett, John Buchan, Edmund Gosse, Ernest Dowson, Henry Nevinston, George Moore, John Oliver Hobbes. These seventeen are from a total of thirty-one represented in this selection, and since the latter has not at all erred in pushing forward famous names, their appearance here can be taken as typical of the *Yellow Book* as a whole. Surely it is astonishing evidence of the vitality of English literature at the close of the nineteenth century that we should think of so many of these contributors to a literary periodical with undimmed respect, fifty years afterwards. It says great things for Harland's discernment of talent that in 1894 not one of these writers was widely known, with the doubtful exception of Henry James.

We have not finished with the honours yet. There were always two sections of every issue of the *Yellow Book*: one labelled 'Literature', meaning the articles, the other 'Art', meaning the illustrations. Another roll, as of drums accompanied by trumpets, can be sounded from the list of artists who contributed: Max Beerbohm, Sir Frederick Leighton, Aubrey Beardsley, William Rothenstein, Charles Furse, Walter Crane, Wilson Steer, John Sargent, Walter Sickert, F. S. Cotman, Constantin Guys, Charles Conder, John Lavery, Muirhead Bone. The Art was never up to the Literature, but some of the pictures reproduced here are among the best things, notably Sargent's sketch of Henry James, a portrait of a girl by Robert Halls, the Sickerts, the Steers, and the Charles Furse. But the Beardsleys are very tedious; there is a whimsical horror by D. Y. Cameron called 'Butterflies', and how the drawing called 'The Dew' by J. Herbert MacNair got published is not easy to guess. Honours being done, it is time now to kick.

People living in the 'nineties, so we are told, were very shocked by the *Yellow Book*, and wanted it stopped by the Government. We must all agree that that was very silly, but we need not go on to agree that it proves that the *Yellow Book* was very good. It wasn't. It published some admirable writers, but it was no *Edinburgh Review*. Confronted by the list of contributors we are rightly impressed, but we must remember that the real character of the thing was not formed by the people we



remember now so much as by Henry Harland, Richard Le Gallienne, Aubrey Beardsley, and their followers. Their faults were enormous. The latter-day cult of youth was reaching its first climax and they made a virtue of showiness. Their snobbishness, particularly when they mentioned Paris, was quite out of control, and showed up the deep and shocking provincialism of the Victorians more than these Victorians supposed. The only true-to-form *Yellow Book* writer who survived the silliness of it quite unharmed was Max Beerbohm. There was a certain amount to be said for the elder people of the time who puffed in clubs and called for the police, though, of course, not a great deal. We must not take their side.

In the final heyday of nineteenth-century civilization, there was obviously something very wrong with the Western world, or its life of art and letters would not have been so abnormally preoccupied with the conflict between rigid conservatism and the desire to be free. The *Yellow Book* people deserved much praise (as they often pointed out), for defying the smugness and sogginess of their times; but they were not reformers, they were only reactionaries. The worst that can be said of them was that they handed on some bad reactionary habits, notably those of youth-mania and self-commiseration, to subsequent generations of writers. The best that can be said, and it is a great thing, is that they were part of an episode in English letters which still excites the imagination, and will probably do so for many years to come.

CHRISTOPHER SYKES

### CHURCHES AND VESTMENTS

*Churches, Their Plan and Furnishing.* By Peter F. Anson. (The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1948. \$6.50.)

*Church Vestments, Their Origin and Development.* By Herbert Norris. (J. M. Dent & Sons. 42s.)

It is laid down in Canon Law (canons 1164, para. 1, and 1296, para. 3) that in the building and furnishing of churches the prescriptions of the liturgy are to be obeyed, Christian tradition followed, and the laws of sacred art observed. It is tolerably easy to discover the rubrics about church construction, but not so easy to learn what Christian tradition teaches, or what are the laws of sacred art. Here are two excellent books which should help us to find out.

Mr. Anson covers a wide field, and in twenty-two chapters deals with the church edifice, with altars, sacred vessels, and sacred vestments, and with such practical matters as seating, heating, lighting and ventilation. In writing his book he has had the benefit of the counsels of

Monsignor Croft-Fraser, chief Master of Ceremonies in the Vatican Basilica from 1935-1940, and of the Maria-Laach trained German-American priest, Fr. H. A. Reinhold of Washington.

Mr. Anson's knowledge of liturgical law is very extensive and extraordinarily accurate. In almost every chapter he gives historical notes and then gives the rubrics, with a commentary and practical advice. The book is copiously illustrated by sketches, done by the author, which are a perfect delight; and are even more helpful than the letter-press in showing what should be done, or, sometimes, what should not be done. The arrangement of the blocks throughout the book is excellent, marking the contrasts of churches and altars. One thing I do not like: the printing of notes at the end of each chapter, instead of at the foot of each page. Chasing about for them irritates the reader. There are a few references that are not correct (e.g. p. 99, n. 30, read *Clergy Review*, 1941, p. 358 and 1938, August, p. 170; p. 113, n. 3, read *Rit. Celeb. Miss.*, II, n. 2; p. 158, n. 4, read *Ibid.*, L. II, c. xi, 10); and some that do not seem to be apposite (e.g. p. 131, n. 17; p. 113, n. 10; p. 208, n. 38). For the correction of some very minor errors: p. 49, these *coronides* of the *Caeremoniale* (I, xii, 11) are mouldings around the table of the altar, happily not known in our midst; p. 130, *fenestella* (*Rub. gen.*, xx) is a niche in the sanctuary wall; p. 195, column 2, l. 4 for 'shorter' read 'longer' (C.E.I., x, 1); p. 210, column 2, l. 10, for 'tiniana' read 'thymiama'. This is a book that is indispensable for all who are concerned with church building and furnishing, priests, architects, sacristans, and, above all, nuns and sisters. The great need of today is to restore to our churches liturgical correctness. This will mean the restoration of truth and dignity; beauty will follow.

Mr. Norris's book is full of interest. It traces the history of each vestment—its material, style, cut and ornamentation—from its earliest appearance, sometimes in pre-Christian times, down to the fifteenth century. Accordingly, his account concerns itself with the vestments and prelatial insignia of the Latin Catholic Church, and stops at the period when the excessive cutting down in the form of ecclesiastical dress began. The book deals also with the history of such kindred matters as the pastoral staff, episcopal rings, the processional cross, the ceremonial fan (*flabellum*), etc.

Mr. Norris is a recognized authority on dress, being the author of a standard work (in six volumes, three of which have been published) on 'Costume and Fashion'. He is also an artist, and his book is generously illustrated with eight drawings in colour and some two hundred and seventy black and white, which are highly informative.

He does not cite in detail his authority for various statements about the evolution of vestments, but he gives a fairly good bibliography. One misses from it, however, the names of such well-known and authoritative books as Barbier de Montault's *Le Costume et Les Usages Ecclésiastiques*.

tiques, the *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, Nainfa's *Costume of Prelates*, and Legg's *Church Ornaments and their Civil Antecedents*.

The period date at the heading of each section is of the greatest help to the reader; but—in a future edition, which will certainly be called for—could we have the page, and not merely the number of the diagrams referred to in the text? It is very annoying to have to fish about for them. There are a few misprints, e.g. p. 96, l. 13, for '117' read '126'; p. 157, l. 12, for 'fig. 6' read 'fig. 71'. On p. 91, l. 15, for 'left side', read 'right side'; and on p. 139, l. 12 for '*Ordo Romanus*' read '*Liber Pontificalis*'. The chief meaning of the alpha and omega symbol (p. 131) is God the Father, and God the Son as eternal, self-existent, infinite being itself (Apocalypse 1.8; 21.6; 22. 12). This book will be of immense interest and great utility to the clergy, to students of antiquity, and to producers of plays and films.

J. O'CONNELL

#### A NEW EDITION OF ST. ANSELM

*S. Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi Opera omnia*. As fidem codicum recensuit Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, Monachus Grissoviensis, O.S.B. Vol. I, II, III. Apud Thomas Nelson et filios, Edinburgi, 1946.

THE publishing house of Thomas Nelson and Sons, of Edinburgh, has undertaken the publication of the complete works of St. Anselm, the first three volumes of which have already appeared. This edition fills a need which the learned world has felt for some time past. Since the publication of Gerberon's critical edition (Paris, 1675), the text of St. Anselm has not, taken as a whole, been improved upon; subsequent editions have merely reproduced Gerberon's text—sometimes with numerous errata, as in the text that is nowadays the most accessible (volumes CLVIII and CLIX of Migne's *Patrologia Latina*)—or else entirely dependent upon it and with but few corrections, as in the Spanish text (Salamanca, 1685) of Cardinal Sáenz de Aguirre; all the modern editions (Ubaghs, Koyré, Schmitt) are of a few individual works. There was needed, therefore, a great complete edition, easy to handle, with an amended text, of St. Anselm, and this the present edition gives us in an exemplary manner.

The first volume comprises the *Monologion*, the *Proslogion* (with the *Liber pro insipiente* of Gaunilo and St. Anselm's answer), the dialogues *De grammatico*, *De veritate*, *De libertate arbitrii*, *De casu diaboli* and the first recension of the *Epistola de incarnatione verbi*.

The second volume contains 19 *Orationes*, 3 *Meditationes* and 147 *Epistolae*, written when he was Prior of Bec. Volumes IV and V, according to the publisher's announcement, will be devoted to the epistles written by St. Anselm when he was Archbishop of Canterbury, and Volume VI (the last) to fragments, indexes and notes.

This text of St. Anselm is edited by Dom F. S. Schmitt, O.S.B., who for many years past has devoted himself to Anselmian studies, and is the editor of the very excellent texts of the *Monologion*, the *Proslogion* and the *Epistola de incarnatione verbi* in the *Florilegium Patristicum* published under the direction of B. Geyer and J. Zellinger by Hanstein (Bonn, 1929-31). The same scrupulous care that was given to these editions of individual works is here given to the complete works; the critical apparatus is sufficiently broad in conception to be able to include any variants of interest for the meaning of the text, but does not go to that meticulous extreme that converts some learned editions into a history of the text—a work of quite different interest from that of a scientific edition intended for rigorous philosophical and theological uses. Fr. Schmitt's text provides, then, a highly precise instrument, invaluable for the study of St. Anselm. Typographically, the edition is perfect, beautifully printed on excellent paper in fine, legible type, with broad margins and well bound; eight plates *hors texte* reproduce pages from the oldest codices. It is a positive comfort to handle these volumes and to admire the effort and care of every kind that has gone into them and that have been possible during these last tremendous years from 1938 to 1946. The first volume registers three dates that record its history, and that really reach out beyond the individual fate of this book:

Printed at Seckau 1938  
 Destroyed by the Nazis 1942  
 Photoprinted at Edinburgh 1946.

In my view, this edition of St. Anselm is opportune in the extreme. Mediaeval thought, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, has succeeded in recovering all its rights and its place in history; it is making itself felt today with the efficacy it is entitled to. The mediaeval period, which was not a 'dark age' for those who lived in it, is also ceasing to be one for us, because the former widespread ignorance of it is gradually being overcome. But as regards the philosophy of the period, the light thrown on the mediaeval centuries has been unequally distributed: the thirteenth century, not without good reason, has absorbed the greater part, and the centuries before and after have remained somewhat in the dark, a result which, by the way, has obscured the thirteenth century itself, only to be properly understood in its historical context. Scholasticism has, in fact, tended to be thought of in its

fully developed form, which is the Thomist synthesis. And its initial and final phases have been given less consideration than they deserve: that which links St. Anselm to the Victorines on the one hand, and, on the other, the Scotism and, especially, the Ockhamism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

St. Anselm, in particular, represents an outstanding moment; in him is initiated with singular spirit an early form of rationalism, not, to be sure, without risks, which was to give Christian dialectic a strong forward movement. The fact that St. Anselm was the author of an argument for the existence of God, the so-called 'ontological proof', capable of dividing later philosophers and theologians polemically into two bands is evidence enough of his intellectual fecundity. But—as I have shown on another occasion<sup>1</sup>—St. Anselm's argument is not only nor principally the dialectical formula set forth in Chapter II of the *Proslogion*, upon which have usually fallen the favourable or adverse interpretations of those who have discussed it, but rather, its full significance emerges from St. Anselm's total situation; a situation to some extent paradoxical, because it is the initiation of a scholasticism, that is, of innovation in tradition; and, on the other hand, St. Anselm's point of departure is faith in a sense that it would be very desirable to make more precise and which differs not a little from the meaning of that word for subsequent philosophers. The concrete meaning of St. Anselm's motto, *fides quaerens intellectum*, is the key to one of the chief ways in which an attempt has been made to construct a 'Christian philosophy'; and one must beware as much of understanding it in purely Augustinian terms (notwithstanding its origin) as of projecting on to it the meaning it would have for a thinker of the thirteenth century; hence the need for an appeal to the work of St. Anselm as a whole, which is one of the great potentialities offered by the history of philosophy and theology to contemporary thought. The relationship between philosophy and religion, which it has been the custom to study in the light of a very narrow range of types, appears essentially enriched when considered in St. Anselm; not only because to that narrow range is added the concrete figure of this great thinker, but also because his outlook, transferred to our present situation, reveals possibilities of its own. For these reasons, St. Anselm is an intellectual topic of essential importance, and consequently the adequate publication of his works could not be more opportune.

JULIÁN MARÍAS

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Julián Marías, *San Anselmo y el insensato* (Madrid, 1944).



## FRENCH AND GERMAN REVIEWS

THE theme of collective responsibility in one form or another constantly appears in recent articles in the continental reviews. At the highest level, but with attractive simplicity, Maurice Zundel in *Idées et Forces* (the quarterly of *Économie et Humanisme*) for January-March deals with the 'theology of human pain': the sum of suffering in the world remains constant, the task of the Christian social reformer—or, better, revolutionary—is to redistribute it more equitably and transform it from inhuman slavery to a joyous carrying of the cross. This, as the editor of *Efficacité* (monthly, from the same publishers) insists in a vigorous article, does not mean simply accepting the fact of sin and merely viewing existing institutions in a new light; nor does it mean the imposition in the name of the Gospel of a pronouncedly Christian social order: it is rather the perpetual rediscovery of a veritably human social order, responsive to the demands of grace and favouring the extension of true liberty.

Pierre de Calan, in *Études* for February and March, raises the particular issue of the responsibilities of French Catholics in the presence of the dangerously extended powers of the state. It is an admirable piece of political philosophy valid for conditions which are present in other countries besides France. It is not enough to be disturbed by totalitarian trends, although it is in this alone that Catholics appear to agree: a coherent body of doctrine on the ethics of power, the rights and duties of citizens and social groups, is needed to relieve this anxiety and guide the reformers. Thomism provides still the most admirably coherent system, but the world has changed since the thirteenth century: then power was personal, closely linked to the right of property; now 'power is detached from the person and presents itself as a social function *sui generis*, without any relation—and often in opposition—to property'. 'Nothing is settled by singing *Salvum fac rempublicam* in place of *Salvum fac regem*. For the immense tracts which open before us in the sphere of the relations between the state and the nation the ancient navigation formulas are no longer adequate; the old charts suffice no more.' To the formation of a system adequate to the needs of the age some contributions have been made—the excesses of nationalism and communism have been denounced; the Holy Father has not only condemned error, but has invited men to search for the truth and himself given very clear directives; societies and individuals have attempted to expound and apply the Church's teaching to current needs. But there is still a vast field to explore: 'The Church is not a purveyor of recipes; its function is to denounce evil, reaffirm and define principles, direct the light of faith towards the point at which error is growing in the darkness, while each Christian remains bound in the conditions and



the temporal situation which directly concerns him to accept his responsibilities.' The conditions of fruitful investigation into the intricate and growing problems of political morality (which may be divided into morality of the state, of the citizens, of intermediary bodies) include a united effort of the whole Church, clerics becoming more aware of the gravity of the disorder in society and laity learning how to establish a bridge 'between their faith and their function'.

Perhaps the most important articles on collective responsibility in recent months—and at least among the more important that have been published since the war—are those by Yves Congar in *La Vie Intellectuelle* for March and April. The crimes of the Nazis have placed the problem squarely before this generation, but it is not only to establish the extent of the German guilt that the inquiry must be undertaken. Fr. Congar takes extreme care to establish his definitions and distinctions, basing his exposition on St. Thomas but alert to the developments of the latter's thought called for in our time: culpability can only apply to physical persons, each is guilty of his own crimes; responsibility is wider—a father is responsible for the debts incurred by his son—but both require some knowledge and power; the liability to punishment is wider still, it may arise simply as an instrument of social order—for example, exclusion from the throne under certain circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, collective sanctions present a delicate problem: they may be imposed on account of a genuinely common fault, but they ought not to consist in personal afflictions, 'human justice may not do in this case what the justice of God does—He, knowing the end to which He directs each thing and being the master of eternal retribution, sometimes extends a penalty to a whole community'.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps, for once, Soviet justice could be held up as an example when it reduced five republics to the rank of provinces on account of their unpatriotic behaviour.

Applying these principles with the utmost generosity and understanding, he finds that Germans on the whole still fail to recognize their real responsibility for the crimes committed in their name; they are too quick to blame others, the Allies, the Versailles Treaty: *historically* they are partly justified in this, but it prevents them from making any advance towards the solution of their own spiritual problem. Until the

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Congar expressly rejects the theory put forward by Dr. Richard Egenter in his essay *Gemeinschaft oder Straftaftung* in the symposium *Aus der Theologie der Zeit* (Pustet, Regensburg, 1948) that there can be a collective guilt in the natural order, the former emphasizing the unique character of original sin and the latter urging that grace presupposes nature—even the deprivation of grace is effected through natural means. As far as it goes, Dr. Egenter's contribution to the discussion is interesting and indeed courageous; but he disconcertingly stops short at the 'general conclusions which are valid for every people at every time'.

<sup>2</sup> Of interdicts imposed in the past for non-payment of episcopal taxes he writes 'procédure qui me paraît d'ailleurs extrêmement discutable en raison de la nature de la sanction, qui atteignait les intéressés dans leur vie religieuse personnelle'.

point at which they appreciated the impossibility of victory, none of them seem to have envisaged anything but 'a German future, a German peace, the rest of the world being happy to be integrated into this order'. Finally, in a brief but candid survey of Church history, he shows how heavily charged with responsibility for scandals have been the *majores* in the Church: those who tolerated superstitious practices on a wide scale, who approved of the list issued in 1509 of relics contained in the chapel of the castle at Wittenberg where Luther was to nail up his theses—five thousand, of which not more than ten had any chance of being authentic. And we, who have had the lessons of history, may be retrospectively responsible if we are too ready to shrug our shoulders in the presence of what may seem to be the milder failings of the present time. But to secure a 'non-conformity' which will in fact be a return to tradition and the full message of the Church, four conditions are necessary: (i) the primacy of charity, pure charity rather than abstract intellectual purism; (ii) observation of the *degrees* of responsibility, from the periphery to the centre; (iii) patience, which respects the historical life of the Church only less than its divinely authorized structure; (iv) adaptations based on a more thorough and humble investigation of traditional teaching.

One of the more welcome consequences of German interest in the responsibility of others is an article by Karl Heinz Abshagen on 'England and Europe' in the March issue of *Frankfurter Hefte* which begins, 'It cannot be concealed that England's popularity on the European continent has sunk lower than at any time since the Boer war.' Yet he writes as a friend and admirer, deploring the loss of England's teaching and example. British aloofness from Europe's search for unity he thinks is not due solely to Bevin or the Labour Party: 'It would be more correct to say that in this question at least Bevin has shown himself acutely sensitive to the development of public opinion in his country.' On the other hand François Perroux in the April *Vie Intellectuelle* complains of narrowminded Europeans who think only in terms of *their* continent.

Another leading theme in recent months—partly stimulated by *The Times* correspondence—is that of reunion and the relations between Catholicism and other Christian bodies. One of the most helpful discussions is in the March *Wort und Wahrheit* where Hans Asmussen states what he conceives to be the authentic Lutheran doctrine and expresses his misgiving at certain aspects of Catholicism; this is followed by an open letter from Karl Rahner, couched in the most friendly terms, and clearly indicating the newest tendencies in Catholic theology which go far to remove the critic's anxieties. Asmussen is disturbed by a natural theology which seems unaware of its limits, by the presentation of the visibility of the Church as if this were not a *corpus sui generis* but merely parallel to the state—this last anxiety being shared in fact

by some intelligent Catholics.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the uncompromising character of the Catholic claim, the courage of the Church in asserting herself to be the *one* Church, makes her 'a partner whom we can warmly greet'. Rahner shows that theologians do not live in a neutral sphere and from there, as it were, construct the Church; rather is it from life within the Church that they construct their theology. And the new tendencies, especially the discussion about the supernatural, are evidence of a determination to give revelation all its rights even while following reason to the fullest extent within its own sphere.

Asmussen has been called 'the Catholic conscience' of the Lutheran Church; in view of his leadership in the struggle with the Nazis he can claim to speak for the whole of that body, but his theological outlook represents one of a number of trends in current Protestant thought. These are carefully analysed and sympathetically presented by Karl Thieme in 'The present dialectic of German Protestantism' in the April *Frankfurter Hefte*. Other contributions to the discussion arising out of *The Times* correspondence include a summary in *Études* for March, an article by J. Lecler, S.J., on 'Erasmus and the Crisis of Christian Unity in the Sixteenth Century' in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* for March, and a lengthy review in the April *Vie Spirituelle* by J. Koelin, O.P., of a new work on Islamic theology.

Ernst Karl Winter returns in the February *Hochland* to the problem of the Boston 'heresy' and makes it easier to understand why a learned priest could be associated with such an extreme interpretation of the principle 'Extra ecclesiam nulla salus' and be involved in excommunication for being too strict. In fact, Fr. Feeney and his associates were condemned for insubordination and not directly for their erroneous views; the appeal from the Holy Office to the Pope, from the Pope ill-informed to the Pope better-informed, is characteristic of every revolt in the Church, and those who make it now have undoubtedly been guilty of grave disobedience to their immediate superiors who cannot but be supported from Rome. But the whole situation becomes more credible against a background where 'Irishism' with its tendency to unconditional acceptance of clerical authority in all spheres predominates, but where also 'Americanism' at times seems to go too far in its liberal interpretation of fundamental Catholic principles. The author appeals for a closer examination by properly authorized theologians of the meaning of this principle and meanwhile for restraint in the use of the term 'heresy' on both sides.

In *Die Oesterreichische Furche* for 18 March, Dr. J. Messner writes on

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Josef Klein's appeal for a return to the theological sources of Canon Law, for the presentation of the latter not as a series of more or less arbitrary commands or even as legislation for one society univocal with that for the other society—the state—but as the expression of supernatural charity and the Church's will to bring her children into the way of salvation. (*Kanonistische und Moraltheologische Normierung in der katholischen Theologie*, Mohr, Tübingen, 1949.)

'Newman in contemporary England', calling attention very gently and in the friendliest spirit to our neglect which made publishers unwilling to undertake a complete new and critical edition of his works as long as so many copies of the nineteenth-century edition remained unsold.

The *Schweizer Rundschau* celebrated its half century in April, with justifiable pride recalling the distinguished names of its contributors and its part in the intellectual developments of this period.

The founder and editor of the *Rheinischer Merkur* in its post-war form, Dr. F. A. Kramer, died on 12 February in his fifty-first year. He had deserved well of German Catholicism and there are far too few Germans of his age and outlook for his death not to be felt as a grievous loss by all European Catholics.

EDWARD QUINN

#### NOTE

Owing to a printer's error, No. 446 of THE DUBLIN REVIEW (Winter 1949) is indicated as being the first issue of Volume 223, whereas in fact it was intended to be the second issue of Volume 222 (see Note on p. iii of No. 446). However, in order to avoid confusion, particularly among librarians and others who bind the issues according to volumes, it has been decided not to regard that Volume Number as an error; consequently the Volume for 1950 has been numbered 224. In future, there will be only one volume for each year, consisting of four numbers.

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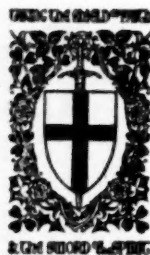
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